SCRIBNER'S MAGAZINE

April 1928

VOL. LXXXIII NO. 4

Frank Lowden, the Farmer's Friend

BY CLARENCE DARROW

The noted liberal views his friend who sits on the other side of the political fence. It is one of the anomalies of politics that forces which gave rise to Bryan, Peffer, and Sockless Jerry Simpson should now be crystallized for the well-dressed, conservative ex-Governor of Illinois.

In the National Republican Convention of 1920 Frank Lowden had the presidential nomination almost within his grasp. Then something happened. It was discovered that overzealous friends had used money to secure some members of the delegation from Missouri. No one who ever knew Lowden had the remotest suspicion that he had any knowledge of this financial deal with the mercenary Missouri politicians.

Still, Frank Lowden was rich, and the bulk of his estate came from the Pullman Company. Those who controlled the convention decided that it would never do to nominate such a rich candidate after this unfortunate episode. Of course only the insiders know whether the powers in control were horrified by the thought of this transaction or whether they seized on this as an excuse to beat a man that they feared they could not control. Upon this subject outsiders have only rumors for the basis of an opinion. The convention was presumed to be in the hands of Boies Penrose, of Pennsylvania. On account of precarious health, Mr. Penrose was obliged to manipulate the convention over the long-distance telephone from Philadelphia. Regardless of who was boss, or what the real reason might have been, it was decided that the party of Lincoln must have a candidate above suspicion, so Lowden, of Illinois, was thrown into the discard and Harding, of Ohio, was nominated and elected in his stead.

Eight years have gone by since that memorable and history-making event, and Frank Lowden is a candidate once more. The country is now fully convinced, as was Illinois at the time, that whether Lowden would make a good President or not, his life and public record have placed him far above the suspicion of corruption. It is not likely that any one, however ambitious, will court defeat even by whispering this

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story at the next convention, and it is equally certain that if Lowden receives the nomination, no political enemy will dare to raise the issue that probably caused his defeat in 1920.

I am not a political disciple of Mr. Lowden or his party. Even were he nominated, his name will not appear on the ticket that I generally vote, or that I shall probably vote this autumn. Still, I have known Mr. Lowden for many years. I have always liked his personality, admired his work, and had a strong affection for the human side of the man. I was sorry for the untoward event that deprived him of the nomination in 1920, and am glad that the country now knows him so well that the reason or excuse which once cost him the presidency will cut no figure in the Republican Convention or the coming campaign.

Frank Lowden is strong and vigorous in body and mind, and in all human probability is better equipped for the duties of President than ever before. He was born on the farm of his father, a pioneer settler of Minnesota. He graduated at the Iowa State University and studied law in Chicago. Soon after his admission to the bar he opened an office, and for more than forty years he has been one of the most prominent and successful lawyers in the great city of the Middle West. As a student Mr. Lowden gained distinction both in the Iowa State University and in the Union College of Law. Since his college days he has always been a wide reader and has a well-stored and cultivated mind. Unlike most men, he did not consider himself educated when he left college, but has steadily cultivated and improved his mind by study, travel, and association with his fellow men.

Lawyers take naturally to politics, and Mr. Lowden is no exception to the rule. For at least thirty years he has been prominent in the political life of his State and nation. He has been a member of Congress for two terms, Governor of Illinois, and is said to have declined a cabinet portfolio.

In spite of the fact that Mr. Lowden has always had a wide acquaintance and strong political backing, he made an excellent business governor. Instead of building up a political machine, he turned his whole attention to the affairs of the State. He appointed only capable and honest men to manage the business of the people of Illinois. The administration was carried on with economy and business efficiency. Under his incumbency useless boards were abolished and political agencies consolidated. Every one familiar with his work as governor concedes that his administration of public affairs was one of the wisest and most economical that Illinois has ever known. Perhaps in this regard it could be called the best.

One may differ with Mr. Lowden's political views, and disagree with him in the broad policies of statecraft. In these matters we all have views and convictions. Still, Mr. Lowden's administration of the office of Governor of Illinois makes it certain that if elected President of the United States he would call to his aid only men of honesty and capacity, and that the nation would have as wise and efficient business administration as it has ever known. He is not simply a business man but he has a vivid imagination and a wide vision, and would not confine his service to merely paring appropriations and haggling over small disbursements, but would consider the needs of the government in the present and the future, and carefully and efficiently provide for those needs.

Many considerations conduce to hu-

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man action, and personal ambition is not one of the least of these. Mr. Lowden's age and his past record are both sufficient to make it certain that if he were elected President he would feel that the only political ambition left to him would be to administer the affairs of government with all the wisdom and ability that he could command.

It is not, however, as a political figure, or a candidate, that I am interested in Mr. Lowden. I am quite certain that what I have written on this subject is true, but, much as I believe in an intelligent and efficient administration, to me political policies are of supreme importance. Mr. Lowden, the candidate for President on the Republican ticket, gives me no emotion, but Mr. Lowden the man is full of human interest and concern.

I have long known him at the bar, and in his goings and comings during the last forty years; I have watched his political aspirations and achievements with interest and gratification; but this is personal. What I say of myself can no doubt be said of many thousands who know him as I have known him. When he was the governor of the State he always found most of the Republican members of the legislature ready to help him in his administration. The Democrats were equally his friends. He has a rare personality, a winning smile, a big heart, a generous mind, and a loyalty that wins all who surround him. He has a fine gift for team-work. He is not simply a hand-shaker, but he is a well-wisher to the world in general.

Most of us, in the sordid affairs of life, have learned to see through a smile, to take a "jolly" for what it is worth, to lay little stress upon the shake of the hand; but Frank Lowden convinces every one that all these manifestations are more than skin-deep, that they come from the heart of a broad, tolerant, and kindly man. Even if he does not mean it, you feel that he is genuine and sincere, and if one meets him in the morning he feels better and happier through the day.

As the governor of a great State Mr. Lowden did his duty as he saw it. He did not give the citizens a political administration. He did not want a second term. He appointed no one to office for the purpose of aiding in a future campaign. He pardoned no one from prison to help a machine. Still he was not afraid to use the pardoning power where it should be used. I remember one case where he saved the life of a negro boy who had no friends, simply because he thought that the boy never had a chance to make his way in life. In another case a girl who was indicted for perjury, in giving false testimony to save her employer, came to my attention. This girl's lawyer was at his wit's end to know what to do; so, before trial, he took her to the governor and asked for a pardon. She told her story, and as he listened, tears rolled down his cheeks. The governor refused the request, but took the lawyer aside and informed him that he would not grant a pardon in advance. He told him to go back and try the case, and, whatever the result, not to let his client get into jail until he could be reached by telephone, when a pardon would be forthcoming. A weaker man than Frank Lowden would have thought of the political effect. He was so strong that he did not need to give weight to any such consideration. Still, these acts, and many other instances, show that Frank Lowden has a heart. There are men who belittle and sneer at the human emotions, and rely only on what

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they are pleased to call their reason; but every student of life and men knows that the emotions are more vital to conduct than the intellect, and that the man without a heart is dead.

As a campaigner Mr. Lowden has few equals. He is a scholar, and has spent much of his life in court. Likewise, he has had a long experience on the stump. He is an easy and fluent speaker, has a fine personality, and is a good mixer. He has every quality needful for getting votes. In political considerations his strength as a candidate should not be overlooked.

At this time Mr. Lowden's main strength seems to be with the farmers, especially of the Middle West. This has a tendency to unite the East on some one else. It is seldom that the granger States grow rebellious. This year there is a distinct rumbling across the prairies and plains that make up the Middle West. This unrest has been known to crystallize for Bryan, Peffer, Jerry Simpson, and many others who declaimed loudly against Wall Street and the money-power. In the past it has lent its ear to vigorous attacks upon the gold standard, the trusts, the railroads, and all forms of concentrated wealth. It is one of the anomalies of politics that these forces should now be massed for Lowden. No one would mistake him for one of the old-time granger leaders. He does not resemble them even in the dark. He is well dressed, uses good English, is accustomed to what is called "good society," and has been for a long time a stranger to the pioneer environment in which his father lived. Mr. Lowden was successful as a lawyer; he made money in his profession. He married a daughter of George M. Pullman, the founder of the Pullman Company, and is now a man of wealth. Many years ago he bought a large tract of fertile land in the beautiful Rock River valley of northern Illinois. It is true that on this farm he raises blooded stock and grain and hay. In this delightful place he has a fine home and barns, and silos and many kine. I never saw the debit-and-credit balance of his farm, so I cannot say whether his land is a profitable venture or not. I would guess that, instead of agriculture supporting him and his family, his income keeps the farm.

A story is told of Horace Greeley, the great agriculturist who owned the New York *Tribune* and likewise had a farm in Connecticut. His paper featured matters of interest to the granger. He used his farm to furnish material for the agricultural department of *The Tribune*. Some one asked Greeley if his farm would keep a family. He answered: "Yes, it will keep a family, but it won't keep mine." I presume that Mr. Lowden is about the same kind of farmer that Horace Greeley was. He likes the country and the beautiful estate, but probably does not plough the fields or milk the cows or get his living from the farm. His estate is one that any man might feel proud and pleased to own, but it is far removed from the farms and conditions where the grangers raise the corn and hogs and grumble about things that they really do not understand. This year the farmers are following Lowden; they do not seem to worry about his culture or his wealth. Their political efforts came to naught when they followed the dreary pilgrimages of Bryan across the prairies and the desert. They listened to his voice and applauded his arraignment of Wall Street and the Trusts, but the East rose up and smote this unorganized army hip and thigh. Mr. Lowden will not wage the same campaign that made Bryan famous at

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every crossroads and water-tank on the far-off plains. He is not a Bryan, and has little in common with the orator who told of the farmers' woes. He does know something of the farmers' needs and how small a share of the combined product of America he is able to invest in his tottering banks. Corn and wheat and hogs are not all the harvest of the broad prairies. The farmers garner in a large percentage of the Republican votes, and their backing is worth a great deal to any candidate on Election Day, and is worth much more on convention day. If Mr. Lowden, by the farmers' aid, succeeds in harvesting the farmers' delegates, and, through them, the nomination, I will wager that the Eastern States will not turn and rend him as they did the ubiquitous Bryan when the grangers were wont to follow his tattered banner through heat and dust.

I have always known that the farmer had a just cause for complaint. He has worked hard, but has never received his fair share of the common harvest. I have always sympathized with his cause, but could never find myself agreeing with the remedies proposed. Will the granger fare better at last?

Mr. Lowden has taken the pains to learn something of the farmers' problem. That the farmers have a just cause is plain from what he says. Mr. Lowden tells us that 30 per cent of the population of the United States are farmers, and yet in 1921 they received only 10 per cent of the national income, and that this income has now probably shrunk to 7½ per cent; and still the great body of consumers are now paying as much, or more than they should, for the product of the farm. Mr. Lowden further tells us that a corn-crop of less than two and one-half million bushels in 1924 brought more money than a three-million-bushel crop in 1925.

The Southern farmers who raise cotton fare no better. It seems that the less the farmer produces the more he gets for his crop and the less it costs him for his work. Mr. Lowden wisely says that "cotton and corn are sick kings." Still it is one thing to diagnose a disease and quite another to find a remedy. Mr. Lowden tells us that the 30 per cent of farmers produce half the exports of the United States. He has put the farmers' contribution too low. It would seem to me that what the farmer needs is better world markets, and a reduction in the absurd tariff tax that he is obliged to pay on what he buys; but we have no hint of such a remedy from Mr. Lowden. Likewise, he could well have attacked the unconscionable railroad rates which are fixed to pay dividends on watered stock and bonds piled on bonds. In place of these plain and obvious remedies, he talks of impossible co-operative marketing, and the McNeery-Haugen bill. True, he gives only half-hearted support to this vicious and foolish bill, but still he thinks the idea good, or, at least, not bad. Here Mr. Lowden joins issue with the official action of his party, which urged and approved the veto of the act.

It looks as if the farmers of the West are solidly for this vetoed law. In effect they seem to approve of government aid to farmers. Of course, if the grangers are to receive direct dole from the public treasury, there is no reason why lawyers and doctors and all other useful citizens should not be placed on the same charity list.

Mr. Lowden has the ability and the political sagacity to make a strong campaign against all comers. Whether he has chosen wisely to tie himself to the farmer and half-way approve a remedy that would seem to lead to destruction remains for the future to demonstrate.

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Seldom, if ever, are political questions decided upon sound principles or by sane reasoning, and doubtless the farmers and the people can be more easily led along a winding path than taken straight to the goal. However, it is not probable that any other candidate will advocate any more direct and obvious measures to give some meed of justice to the farmer.

Mr. Lowden is a believer in a high protective tariff; evidently the higher the better. The country has gone a long way on this attractive road; how much farther can it travel before it brings universal chaos and hara-kiri? Every industry and calling is always demanding help. What is government for save to contribute to the individual? At the best, this way of getting rich is like lifting yourself over the fence by your bootstraps; one pushes down while he pulls up. When all get their bit from the favorite trough, then no good can come to any. If the benefit is ever made equal to all, it can be better brought about by the old methods of China—building a wall around the nation and permitting no trade with the outside world.

Of course I am no political prophet; I cannot possibly tell whether the course Mr. Lowden takes on this important question is politically wise or not. In this matter at least I am old-fashioned; I still believe in freedom of trade. I refuse to adopt the modern idea that trade is robbery; I believe that commerce means mutual help; I know that when the favored interests go the limit, they will fight each other for an advantage or they will combine for general plunder. I remember a debate years ago in the United States Senate over some tariff schedule. An able and witty member from North Carolina, Senator Vance, in referring to the question, said that the tariff bill reminded him of the remarks of a member of the legislature of his State while debating the question of what sort of fish should be used to stock the streams. The member advocated a certain kind because they began by driving out every other fish and ended by eating each other. We may be a long way from the end but we are headed in that direction.

Mr. Lowden's personality, integrity, and ability are beyond question, but his political views are conventional and thoroughly in line with things as they are. While he doubtless has a real sympathy with the farmer who for the most part has lived a life of privation and toil for a skimpy reward, still Wall Street should worry about Mr. Lowden. He was not born with a golden spoon in his mouth; but good health, good ability, a wholesome and kindly nature, combined with the prime factor in the life of men and nation's good luck, have all conspired to make his road easy and his ways sane and safe—at least safe. He thinks and talks of the farmer and the under-dog, but the habits and ways of seventy years are seldom changed. He will never die outside the breastworks. To those who meet him on the path, to the friends he knows, to the wayfarers who journey with him, whether rich or poor, he will always be considerate, helpful, and kind. His fine emotions will never be given to making new paths, to exploring the trackless wastes of human endeavor and human fears and hopes and pains. He will blaze no trails. Neither politically nor personally will he seek the stony roads, the tangled jungles, and the desert fastnesses. He will roll leisurely along smooth highways in Pullman cars. Still, behind him he will leave men, women, and children who have been gladdened

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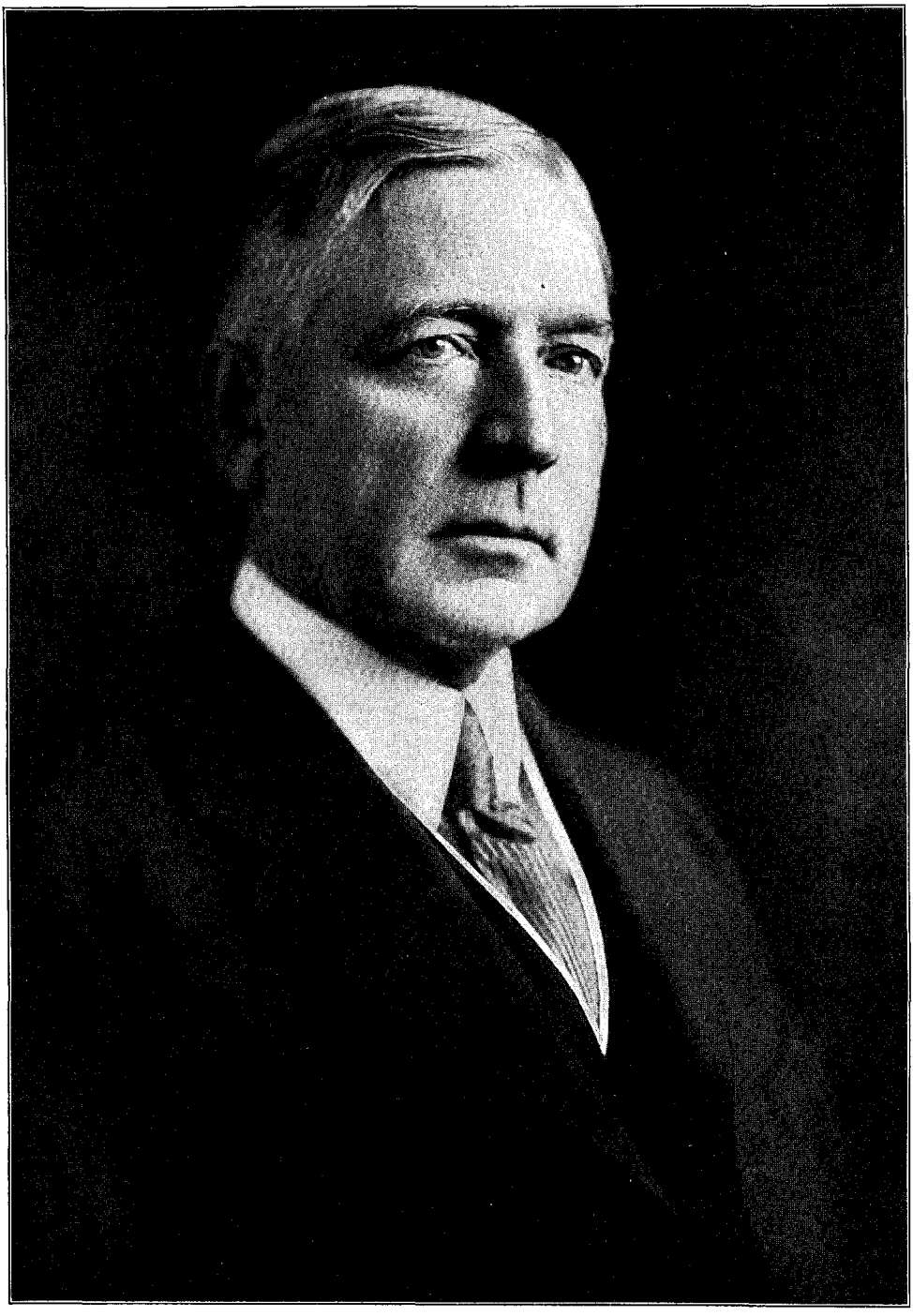

Frank O. Lowden.

From a photograph by Harris & Ewing.

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by sincere hand-shakes, a friendly smile, and a kind word. These qualities have their value in the complex reactions which we call life. Mr. Lowden is not a John Brown, an Oliver Cromwell, or a Martin Luther. He is a Gladstone, or a Disraeli, who counts the costs, and will never wander far to explore new fields of political life, or meet in deadly conflict the strongly intrenched champions of ease and convention.

One makes a mistake if he thinks that Mr. Lowden's marriage opened his road to wealth and power. His ambition, force, vigor, and personality brought him success. His marriage, of course, brought him great wealth, but it brought him much more. Mrs. Lowden inherited millions, but Mrs. Lowden is much more than an heiress. She is a woman of tact, of culture, and refinement, and, what is more important, she has broad sympathies, and in unostentatious ways she has devoted a large part of her life and wealth to helping the unfortunate and those in need. If Mr. Lowden should be elected President of the United States, the White House would be in the keeping of a graceful, tactful woman of fine intelligence and sympathy. Few women have ever been better qualified for this place than Mrs. Lowden.

If Mr. Lowden wins, he will not be a Jefferson, a Jackson, or a Cleveland. The newspapers will not criticise him. The public will not abuse him; he will not create a stir. His administration will be quiet, dignified, intelligent, and businesslike. No scandal will attach to him or the men he calls around to aid him in his task. He will not seek foreign conquest. He will not embroil his country in war. He will try his best to help the United States live at peace at home and abroad. This, too, has its values, especially in a world that is sick, nigh unto death, with carnage, hatred, fear, and universal distrust.

In the next number will appear Everett Colby's portrait of Charles Evans Hughes. Although Mr. Hughes declares he is not a candidate, he is one of our most important figures in world politics.

Senex

By Henry van Dyke

Lame, I hobble cheerful on:
Old, my armor has no rust:
Death can't take what Life has won:
God alone I fear—and trust.

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The Woman-Hater

BY CONRAD AIKEN

It was half past ten on a night in May, and the three medical students had just been through their notes in histology for the third time. The windows were open, and a sound of dripping could be heard on the stone window-ledge; the desultory drip, gradually slowing, that succeeds a spring shower. One of the men lay face down on a couch, his face pillowed sideways on his bare arms. His eyes were shut. The other two sat in fumed-oak Morris chairs, with their legs stretched out before them, and smoked cigarettes. Empty glasses stood on the floor beside them. They had taken off their coats.

"Well, what do you say, Bill? How about it?"

"I guess it's stopped raining."

"Sure, it ain't gonna rine no more. . . . Let's go."

Bill, retying his loosened necktie, got up and went to the window. He rested his freckled hands on the sill and leaned out.

"Yes—it's stopped, all right. And the stars are coming out. . . ." He turned around, looked down at the man on the couch, and idly dislodged a cushion from the couch-arm, so that it fell on the sleeper's face. "And, by God! I couldn't learn another symptom if I was paid a million dollars for it. Wake up, Pete."

Pete lay unmoving. "Leave me alone," he murmured.

"Oh, come on, Pete. It'll do you good. You need a little excitement to get the adrenals working."

"No," said Pete. And then with violence: "NO!"

"What time did you tell her we'd meet her, Dil?"

Dil got up and stretched, eyeing his reflection in the mirror over the mantelpiece. He smoothed his sleek hair with his hands, with something of an air of vanity. He was dark and handsome.

"I said we'd be at the stage-door at twenty of eleven. . . . What do you say about another little drink? . . . Say, Pete, what's the matter with you, anyway? Why don't you come and meet her? She's a peach. She's a creamer. She isn't any ordinary chorus-girl, you know."

"Women don't interest me," said Pete.

"There he goes again," said Bill. "What's the use?"

"You're both of you damn fools," said Pete. "Just spending your money for nothing. What does she care about you? All she wants is food and somebody to dance with. She just uses you to kill time. She's probably got a couple of husbands in New York."

"You're crazy," said Dil mildly.

He went into a bedroom, and came back with his coat.

"Come on," he said.

"All right," said Bill. "Wait till I get my coat. Sure you won't come, Pete?"

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"No, I'm going to bed. And for the love of Pete don't be so damned noisy when you come back. Last night I thought somebody was being murdered."

The two men put on their hats, without comment, and went out. Dil carried a malacca stick with a silver band around it. They went down the stairs in silence, and emerging into the spring night turned to the left.

"It's funny about Pete," said Dil. "I wonder what's the matter with him."

Bill ruminated.

"He was always that way," he said. "That was the way he was all through college."

"Didn't he ever have a girl?"

"Never a girl. Never would go to a dance or anything. You know, it isn't that he's shy, or anything like that. He came into my room once, by accident, when I was giving a tea. And he got along perfectly all right. In fact, my sister was crazy about him. She tried like the devil to get hold of him again. Even called him up on the phone to ask him to dinner. I was there when he answered it. And he just kind of drawled back at her, kidding her along. He just kept saying, 'No, I guess not, thanks,' till she got tired. Gee! she was mad. He didn't bother to give any excuse. Just refused pointblank."

"Maybe he just needs to be waked up."

"Maybe he does. . . ."

They turned to the left again, entering a main thoroughfare, which was crowded and brightly lighted. They passed a lunch-room, and then the portals of a stone church. A lot of sodden confetti was scattered on the wet sidewalk.

"He's right about one thing," said Dil. "This business costs a lot of money. I'm getting kind of low."

"By gosh, *that's* true."

"But then, it's worth it."

"Sure. There was a picture of her in the *Theatre Magazine* last week. It said she was considered the most beautiful woman on the musical-comedy stage."

"Everybody runs after her. I wonder why it is she's taken such a fancy to us. I guess maybe she meets so few men who are decent to her. You know how it is."

"Well, she seems to like us, all right. Anyway, she likes *you*."

"I'm not so sure about that. But she's pretty keen on you, Bill. I could tell it last night by the way she looked at you."

"Oh, go on."

"When she was dancing with you. I had an idea I'd better go home and leave you alone together. But then I thought you might be embarrassed."

Bill gave a flattered and uneasy little laugh.

"That's just the way I felt about you," he said. "I guess maybe she's pretty fond of us both, really. It must be a kind of a relief to a woman like that to feel sure that a man isn't all the time trying to take advantage of her. She feels safe with us. She knows we aren't going to try to make love to her. She feels safe with us."

Dil hung his stick over the crook of his arm.

"You don't suppose she gets bored with us, do you?" he said. "I was wondering last night whether she just thought of us as kids. It was when she was talking about that week-end party she went to at the painter's on Long Island. It sounded pretty gay—almost fast."

Bill pondered. The lights of the theatre-canopy were just ahead of them. The people were beginning to come out, and the line of cars was forming.

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"Why should she?" he said. "After all, we're as old as she is. And we aren't either of us fools. . . . Of course a girl like Mae is bound to run into some fast parties. She has to be a good sport. But that doesn't prove anything against her. And you've only got to look at Mae to see that she's nice. And the way she's all the time telegraphing and telephoning to her mother."

Dil sighed.

"Absolutely," he said. "Right turn."

They greeted the doorman at the stage-door with the dignified knowingness of men of the world, and informed him that Miss Melville was expecting them. Dil tapped the ferrule of his stick against the door-jamb. They waited in silence, and other men were waiting also, with their coat-collars turned up. They looked like conspirators. Two chorus-girls came out, two men stepped forward quickly and bowed, taxis came and went.

"She's coming now," said Ollie, the doorman.

"Hello, boys!" she cried. "I didn't see you out in front to-night."

"No, we had to sweat for an exam," said Bill.

She stood on the step, drawing the fur collar against her lovely chin. She smiled amiably at each of them in turn, and they smiled back at her.

"You look fine," said Dil.

"Don't waste time flattering me," she said, "let's get a taxi."

They got a taxi and piled into it and drove to the Shawmut. The hotel lobby was crowded, and so was the grill-room, but they found a booth. The band was playing a fox-trot and people were dancing in the railed-off centre of the floor. A lot of the tables had toy balloons tethered to them, and some of the couples carried balloons with them as they danced.

"Same old crowd," said Mae. "There's grandpa and his cutie. He's got a new pair of spats."

"Would you like a little fox-trot?" said Dil.

"I don't mind a little one. Let's go."

Bill ordered the supper while they danced. Dil was talking to Mae, and she seemed to be listening with great amusement. They took a few turns and came back.

"I've been telling Mae about Pete," said Bill.

"He sounds too fascinating," said Mae. "Tell me some more about him. Does he live with you?"

"Sure, he lives with us," said Dil. "Regular old crab. Got the best head in the class."

"He's a real woman-hater. Won't have a thing to do with them. My sister tried to get him to come to a dinner-dance once, and he turned her down flat."

"What does he say about women?" said Mae. She leaned forward on her elbows. Her eyes were very bright. Then she took out a little mirror and began titivating her eyelashes and nose with a tiny finger-tip. She smoothed the powder round her nostrils.

"Oh, he just says 'women don't interest me.' "

"Well, I'd like a drink," said Mae.

"I've got a flask," said Dil, "and there's some White Rock coming."

"Is my nose all right?"

She snapped shut the lid of the little box and looked brightly from one to the other. Then she opened it again and, tilting her head forward, surveyed the top of her head to make sure that her hair was not disarrayed. She patted a golden wave or two lightly with the palm of her hand.

"Perfect," said Bill.

"Absolutely perfect," said Dil.

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The music stopped, the couples drifted back to their booths with trailing and bobbing balloons, and in the distressing silence the waiter opened the White Rock. As soon as he had gone away Dil took out his flask and poured from it into the three glasses. The saxophone began again. Mae subtly swayed her shoulders, narrowing her eyes a little.

"Mm—what I *mean!*" she said, lifting her glass.

"Well, here's to poor old Pete," said Dil.

"Oh, yes, tell me some more about Pete. Is he good-looking?"

"He's red-haired and blue-eyed," said Bill. "Red curly hair. He's not what you'd call handsome exactly—do you think so, Dil?—but he's awfully *nice*-looking. He's terribly innocent."

"This is a nice drink," said Mae. "I needed it badly. Gosh, it was hot in that dressing-room! I thought I would die. I thought I would faint or something. I tell you what, boys, I'm going to bed early to-night."

"Oh, don't say that. The night's still young."

"I'm going to bed at one o'clock on the dot. You see if I don't. Just the same, I'd like to do something exciting, if I weren't so tired."

"Are you feeling tired? This drink will fix you up. We were feeling pretty shot ourselves. We've been working since three this afternoon. But I'm feeling a lot better already. All you need is a little jazz."

"What would you like to do, Mae?" asked Dil. "How about riding out to the Bell-in-Hand and having a dance? Some of the fellows are going to be out there."

Mae considered, her pretty head on one side. She watched the couples dance by, watching with a sort of melancholy, bored expression. She rested her chin on knitted fingers.

"I want to do something *exciting*," she said. "Gosh, how I hate this sleepy town."

"Oh, it's not so bad," said Bill.

"Sleepy Hollow," said Dil.

"What else does Pete say about women, Dil? I bet some girl turned him down. That's the way it usually is."

"No, nothing like that. It's just the way he is. He's a real woman-hater. We tried to make him come and meet you, but he wouldn't. He said women didn't interest him."

Mae smiled at Dil in a queer sleepy sort of way. Her eyes were very blue and very deep.

"He didn't want to meet me?" she said.

"It would have been the same with anybody," Bill said, a little anxiously. "He never goes out anywhere. Never goes to a show."

"What's he doing now?"

"Now? This minute? Probably gone to bed."

"Well, let's go and wake him up."

Dil laughed. Bill poured out the rest of the White Rock. The glasses were empty.

"By gosh, that would be amusing," said Dil. "I wonder what old Pete would do if we came in and woke him."

"Throw a fit or something," said Bill.

"I'd like to meet a real woman-hater. I've never met one. Does he bite and scratch?"

Dil smoothed his black hair; he was very urbane.

"Oh, no. He's very polite. But the only things that interest him are surgery and hunting. He went big-game hunting in Africa just after he got out of college. Shot a couple of lions, and nearly got killed by a lioness."

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"My, my, just think of that. Where was this—in California?"

They laughed, and drank.

"No movie stuff," said Dil. "Honest-to-God Africa. He's got the gun to prove it."

"Well, now, isn't he the little hero," said Mae primly. "Let's go and wake him up and talk to him. I'd like to talk to him. We can go there, can't we?"

"Sure, we can go there."

"That's a swell idea," said Bill. "By gosh, it'll be fun to see Pete in a situation like that! By gosh, I wonder what he'll do. It wouldn't surprise me if he shot you or jumped out of the window."

"No; do you know what I think he'll do? He'll just take one look at Mae and go to sleep again. That's what he'll do. He'll open one eye like a sick hen and then shut it again and tell us to go to hell."

"What will you bet? I'll bet I can make him like me," said Mae. "I'll bet you a dinner. Give me a cigarette, that's a good boy."

"All right, I'll bet you can't."

"Come on, then, let's go."

"Wait till I pay the bill. You go ahead and get a taxi."

Mae and Bill got up and moved through the returning dancers, and a moment later Dil followed them. They walked down the steps from the lobby under the lighted glass canopy and got into a scarlet taxi. The stars were out. Mae sat between them and held their arms, and laughed.

"This is great," she said.

"It's only just round the corner," Bill murmured. "Here it is."

"What—already? We could have walked."

"Well, you'll have walk enough going up the stairs."

"All right, you'll have to push me."

They put their hands against the small of her back and pushed her, all three of them laughing. Bill took out his key and opened the door. The apartment was dark, and he felt along the wall and switched on the light. Everything was exactly as they had left it—the glasses still on the floor, the window open, and the cushion just where Pete had flung it. A purple galleon was embroidered on the cushion, and there was a rip at one corner.

"He's gone to bed," said Dil. "Just what I said."

"Where does he sleep? In here?"

Mae went to one of the bedroom doors, on tiptoe.

"No, here."

"Let me see him. . . . You leave this to me!"

She flung off her cape and went to the door. Bill reached his hand in and turned on the light. Pete was asleep. His head was twisted a little to one side, and his left arm lay outside the blanket, across his breast. His lips were lightly closed, and his face had the soft and relaxed look of one who sleeps deeply.

"Isn't he *darling!*" Mae whispered. "Sh-h-h!"

She removed her slippers and went to the bed, where for a moment she leaned over the sleeping figure.

"Hello, Pete!" she said softly.

Pete didn't stir. His breath was perfectly even. Mae knelt on the bed, stretched herself out beside him, very gently, and put her arm across him. She leaned her face above his, by degrees allowing him to feel more and more of her weight. Then she inclined her head and gave him a kiss. As she withdrew her face, smiling deliciously, Pete opened his eyes. He didn't move—his face didn't change expression. He looked up at the smiling and beautiful face that hung over him, very much as if he thought he might still be dream-

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ing. Then he put his arm around her shoulders and drew her down to him, without saying a word.

Bill and Dil retreated. Bill sank down on the couch, and Dil went to the window. They both felt a little hurt.

"Well, I'll be damned!" said Dil.

"Can you beat it?"

"So that's the end of poor old Pete."

Bill went to the door and looked in. Mae was sitting on the edge of the bed, smiling still, and Pete was staring up at her, entranced, as if his visitant were a sort of archangel. Neither of them said anything.

"The drinks are on us," said Bill, "any time you're ready. Come on, Mae, and let the great man get some clothes on."

Mae jumped up and laughed.

"So that's that," she said. "Put on a record, some one, and let's dance. Don't look so gloomy, Bill! . . ."

"By gosh, that was too easy."

"I like him," said Mae. "He's a darling! Why didn't you tell me he was such a darling?"

"Oh, yes, he's a darling, all right," said Dil.

There was a silence, a little awkward, during which Pete got up and shut his door. They could hear him moving round at a great rate, getting dressed. Bill put on a record and wound the phonograph. His eyes met Dil's, and they both looked away. They were both wishing that it hadn't happened. Then the fox-trot began whining, Bill snapped his fingers, and Dil took Mae in his arms, grinning, and started to dance.

Height

By Anne Spencer Morrow

When I was young I felt so small
And frightened, for the world was tall.

And even grasses seemed to me
A forest of immensity

Until I learned that I could grow,
A glance would leave them far below.

Spanning a tree's height with my eye,
Suddenly I soared as high,

And fixing on a star I grew,
I pushed my head against the blue!

Still, like a singing lark, I find
Rapture to leave the grass behind.

And sometimes standing in a crowd
My lips are cool against a cloud.

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Spring Blizzard in Montana

BY IRENE H. WILSON

Ten thousand sheep a-lambing on the range,
With forty men to aid them:—smilingly
The sheepman sat his horse and gazed, content,
Over his fecund flocks.

The early grass
Was greening on the miles of sun-swept hills
And down the red-shale gulches: pasturage
To round the old ewes' bags with yellow milk
And bring the new-dropped "woollies" plumb alive,
Quirking their tails, a-bunting and a-bucking
Like unbacked broncos.

Then the blizzard came,
Leaping out of the north with Indian howling,
A wolf for fierceness. Ten long days it sank
Its fangs into the flank of broken earth;
And ten long nights it prowled along the ridges,
While red-eyed, crouching men with bleary lanterns
Groped among snow-wet wool for shivering humps,
All legs and ears and tremulous, feeble bleat,
And bore them to the flaring warmth of fires.

But sheep can stand small grief at such a time.
Bands, drifting with the wind, came to the edge
Of blind cut-banks; close-crowded from behind,
Fell to a crush of tortured, struggling death.
A thousand lambs, numbed by their bitter welcome,
Unwakened, died a-borning. Thousands more,
Following on wabbly legs the gaunted ewes
In their vain pawing for deep-buried grass,
Tugging at empty teats, stumbled exhausted
Into the footprints of the haggard storm.

And soon the smooth, inexorable peace
Of snow more white and soft than their own coats
Of crinkled velvet, folded over them,—
Cruel, compassionate, sternly beautiful.

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Cane River Portraits

BY WILLIAM SPRATLING

ILLUSTRATIONS BY THE AUTHOR

A young artist and architect of New Orleans writes of and draws the "free mulattoes" of Isle Brevelle and other curious Cane River folk.

RED hills, gashed by the great Red River and spread with green, lie in the direction of Natchitoches some three hundred miles above New Orleans. The river, taking a short cut and changing its course overnight at a certain point, left, as a calm divorcée, the beautiful winding Cane River—in reality a lake, smiling and placid. That was many years ago.

Life in this country is little changed. The negroes are much the same as before that time. The crops of cotton and cane and corn are still motivating ideas with those farming; and the broad and fertile fields, extending for miles, are broken only by the lovely green banks of Cane River. Many of the old plantation tracts of five and six thousand acres are still intact. The banks of the river are overhung in parts with tall sweetgums and cypress, and occasionally studded with palmetto or yucca. The little old whitewashed negro cabins which dot the road or which appear half lost along the little streams of the back plantations complete the setting.

On this particular visit, before Easter, spring planting had been done and people were taking things in a leisurely way. They were almost invariably happy to sit and be drawn, regarding it as an amusing thing that there wasn't any kodak, only a pencil.

At breakfast, with Messaline serving the big table with her fawnlike and almost animal grace (pink silk stocking shaping head), there was a ready if slightly abashed consent for me to draw her picture.

Messaline was the kind that would get herself out in all her finery for an occasion of this sort, and I had to warn her in advance that I wanted her just so. Later, talking about her children and their various names, she volunteered the information that she herself had been named by her mother after a French lady in Natchitoches. That would make it "Marceline," though the young thing had her doubts about the spelling.

Messaline was there in the kitchen when Dougie sat for her studied portrait. It had been raining, and across the stable lot the banks of Cane River glistened emerald with wet. Suppressed amusement on the part of the chocolate Messaline. "Lawsy, and you wid dat mouf full of snuff." There were further sly confidences of this kind made under breath, with much chuckling,

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to Henry, gravely consuming his dish of rice and gravy.

Dougie was proud. She sat silently, her upper lip's protrusion accentuated with an extra load of snuff. Furthermore, she scorned to notice others who passed, though she volunteered information later concerning "that low-down Joe Prudhomme and the res' them northe'n niggers." The drawing finished, Dougie could not be said to be readily appreciative. "Got ole debbil in dem eyes." Another time I heard her say to Messaline in the kitchen: "Why reckon he make my mouf so biglike?" —though it was not that she really minded. She was, in fact, rather flattered. Also highly amused.

The big negress was something of a critic and her criticisms were usually mimickings. The episode to be put on was ordinarily inspired by her neighbors. There was one slender woman Dougie particularly disliked and whom she referred to as "dat 'oman wid de washboard front." It was not two days after the sketchmaking that, as we passed her house in a pirogue in the evening, we heard her giving a lucid account of the business of being drawn, or rather an extravaganza on the making of a portrait. It was somewhat amazing and entirely ridiculous, even if it was, as a take-off, a little broad.

Except that he was too splendid physically, Henry Tyler should have taught school. He was a natural leader among the negroes and was the best hand on the plantation. He was also a good preacher and head of their Masonic Lodge. Moreover, there was a fine spiritual quality about him. Henry loved books.

As an African type he was undoubtedly pure. He was tall and well built, and when I saw him in the field the great muscles of his shoulders were like carved ebony.

Henry had never been to school himself, and yet he had laboriously taught his three young sons to read. And that was done after the day's work in the field — after ten hours or more of ploughing and chopping cotton. All four worked.

While I made the sketch Henry told me of his ambition to learn about electricity. He was particularly interested in that and in mechanics, though a correspondence-school course in astrology had attractions for him, too. At that time he was absorbed in a book called "Uncle Tom's Cabin," which must be brought out after the drawing was done. There were one or two paragraphs a little hard for him.

It was not pleasant to contemplate what the Chicago Belt of Harlem would do to a man like this. Certainly that purity and kindliness would disappear, to be replaced by something less sweet.

Clément Claiborne was a slave nigger. He had been in the service of the family whose name he bore—the family of the first territorial governor of Louisiana. Within his memory many things had come to pass. To hear him talk was to have conjured up a complete and gorgeous background of the old life on the plantations. Since then Uncle Clément had become famous as a craftsman. He wove the finest baskets in the parish. He was also a friend worth having. We would frequently take walks together and sometimes we would visit Madame Aubert-Rocque.

Madame Aubert was of the oldest generation of what are known there as "free mulattoes." These people, before

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FIVE STUDIES OF CANE RIVER CHARACTERS

FROM THE SKETCH-BOOK OF WILLIAM SPRATLING

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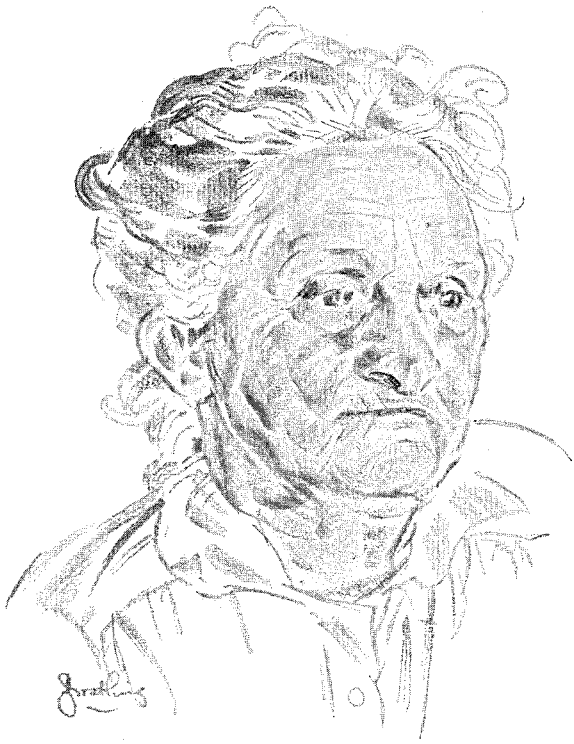

Madame Aubert-Rocque.

Messaline.

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Margaret Wiggins, "Dougie."

Henry Tyler.

Uncle Clément Claiborne.

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the Civil War, were not only prosperous and independent, but were slave-owners as well. Proud and at the same time humble — proud with her own people and with the negroes, and with the white people respectful and charmingly dignified, Madame Aubert lived rather humbly in a small house of mud and half-timber which had been built in the eighteenth century by some of her French forebears. All her life she had lived there on the Isle Brevelle. The Isle Brevelle section, comprised of only a few miles of fertile farm lands, bounded on one side by Cane River, was originally cut off when Red River made its détour. It has been exclusively inhabited by these French mulattoes since the early seventeen hundreds when the original settlers came over from Paris. One of them, Tomas Metoyer, was Madame Aubert-Rocque's great-grandfather. Of that gentleman's son, Augustin, I discovered more before the end of the visit.

In front of this bit of provincial France an old-fashioned garden, variously colorful, lay within the confines of a lichen-covered and battered fence of split palings. Madame Aubert, throwing open the blue-green shutters of the front of the house, hastened down the path to meet us. Clément Claiborne retired, dusty hat held in black hands, to rest under a big cottonwood-tree in the yard.

There was something very pure in the atmosphere about this place. Good French was spoken here. Within those mud and hewn-timber walls the place was spotless and shining, the rough wall surfaces heavily whitewashed. There was an accumulation of small religious objects, an old-fashioned crayon portrait or two on the wall, a framed marriage certificate (chromo), and the three or four "In Memoriam" panels occupied the place of honor over the bed. It all revealed a quiet simplicity and charm of existence freshening to senses dulled by modern city life.

Madame Aubert was pleased and a little excited about being drawn. She was a patient model and talked along at intervals about the old days; about a cousin from Chicago who had died recently and who had been sent all the way back to Isle Brevelle to be buried, and she told me much about the work of the church and the convent school. Augustin had given the church. That was long, long ago, and since then it had burned and been replaced by the present meeting-house. When the drawing was finished I must look at a picture of Augustin. There was talk about the crops, the taxes, the high water in New Orleans. Eight dollars had had to be raised for taxes on the little place that spring. Madame Aubert had been in terrible distress—et pourquoi non? One bale of cotton had been hers that winter and what was it now worth? Practically nothing. Cotton! It would be the ruination of the South. We talked about her quiltmaking and were successful in causing to be brought forth from an old chest a collection such as would astonish any antiquary. All the patterns classic to past generations were there, and while the patterns may have been sophisticated, the colors themselves were gay and revealed something more primitive and childlike. They were mostly of cotton, as were other things. Here was this scrupulous room —the simple old four-poster tucked in with the whitest of sheets and counterpane, and piled at the head with pillows in cases slightly worn but immaculately ironed.

She brought forth with naïve pride

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a wisp of an old cotton dress. This, she said, was her morning dress. The print had been bought in Natchitoches in 1850 by her mother, and was a simple crinoline of scallops. She should have been painted in it.

There seemed some sort of curious connection between the lives of these people and the soft white material with which their existence had been so closely interwoven—as though their very circumstances had partaken of the same quality. What it had done to them —this thing that was once the strength of the country and was now so powerless to bring prosperity! The effect was of something a little faded in pattern but infinitely vital. Here was Madame Aubert-Rocque in person, detached from the rush of life and still completely concerned with things of the soil which we have almost forgotten existed.

A batten door led into a sort of small storeroom, a lean-to addition to the original house built of vertical boarding. Madame Aubert was apologetic as she led me in. The water had come in the last time it rained and had stained the whitewashed walls. A pane of glass was out in the single small window. Leaned against the long side of the room was the portrait. It was perhaps nine feet tall by six feet wide and the fine old French gilt frame was fully three hands wide, ornamented in the best manner of the period.

Here was a café-au-lait Augustin Metoyer done in the grand manner. A tall man dressed in black, with a Prince Albert coat, and, back of the figure, in voluminous folds, a red plush curtain. The features were distinctly negroid, though suave and well informed. The eyes were intelligent. With one hand there was a graceful gesture toward a toylike church which reposed on green velvet grass just back of marble steps in one corner of the picture. The thing must have been painted just after 1800, possibly by one of the early itinerant artists of that period—perhaps a friend of Audubon's. There were numerous scratches, a bullet-hole, and two large rents—as large as a man's hand—that had been inflicted when Banks's army raided that territory in '61.

Madame Aubert sighed. The priest would not have the portrait in the church. It had been too badly used. And last year all the people of the parish were going to contribute to its reparation, but it had been a bad year and cotton was so low. Alors! it would have to stay with her. But, after all, she would not be here much longer. "These young people, what they care for these thing? All they want is money for automobile."

The whole fabric seemed to be slowly disintegrating—before the eyes, as it were. The accident of race suicide. Madame Aubert, to me, was epic. Like something put away by a past generation and quietly forgotten. And then, lo! the pride and glory of a hundred years ago suddenly brought to light and made poignant by a portrait like this, to be discovered in poverty-stricken surroundings. Madame Aubert passed a frail hand gently across the surface of the canvas, removing a heavy streak of gray dust.

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Shall We Govern Ourselves?

BY ALBERT C. RITCHIE
Governor of Maryland

The executive of the Maryland Free State, political precedent-smasher, one of the outstanding candidates for the Presidential nomination, discusses certain illusions of democracy and enunciates his political faith.

If there is any one thing of which the average American is sure, it is that politically he governs himself. It is one of the illusions of democracy that, because our government rests on the "consent of the governed," we therefore actually do govern ourselves. In political theory we do, but in practice we don't. We are developing into the most overgoverned and least self-governing of peoples; and indifference and subservience to the increasing power and changing character of "the government" are becoming a political phenomenon of the first importance.

Under our system the government is not the creator but the creature of our social order, and we the people are the grantors of all its powers and sanctions. When, therefore, we talk of self-government politically, we are dealing mostly with the definition and delimitation of those powers and sanctions. As creators of our government we have reserved to ourselves a certain inalienable sovereignty that inheres in freemen, and certain rights, liberties, and limitations defined in the written and implied covenants of our constitutions. Our cardinal political problem is how best to preserve these limitations and ultimate sovereignties and at the same time maintain our individual and collective rights and liberties.

The actual problems of government in the modern state are, of course, far too complicated, and the accumulated wisdom of centuries of political thinking and experience is much too impressive, to justify any one formula as the sum total of political wisdom; but, whether you guide by the experience of history, or the conclusions of political thinkers, or by a simple faith in democracy, you are certainly justified in asserting that no principle of a sound political science is better established than that centralized government should be held to an irreducible minimum and self-government be favored to the largest possible maximum.

In politics it is easy to regard every period as one of transition or of crisis, and we may delude ourselves in thinking that we are in such a period now. But there are significant omens, for those who care to read the horoscope. Perhaps democracy postulates too much in assuming that the people care to think much about the elemental and fundamental aspects of their government; but surely there is need for such thinking. We must not forget that political democracy is still in the making, and is still a relatively young enterprise, with a future dependent entirely upon the degree of conscious thought and effort which is put upon its develop-

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ment. Most of its problems are unsolved, and it is pertinent to ask how their solution may be affected by some of the fundamental changes that are now taking place.

Have conditions so changed that our delimitations of power or the principles laid down by our Constitution for the State and Federal system must now change with them? Does democracy require that the States be regarded as mere arbitrary geographical administrative areas, capable only of local self-government in its more parochial aspects? Must sectional differences, diversities, discords, and needs be made to yield to one central source of power? Has the doctrine of States' rights no longer any legitimate meaning? Have our traditional ideas as to local self-government, the division of powers, and the effective sources of social control, become obsolete? Have we more government, more law, more regulation, more interference with the processes of life and liberty and the government of self, than are necessary?

II

The significant political development of our era probably is not so much a conscious aggrandizement of power in the central government as the unconscious abdication of it in the local units. We are "consenting" to an increase of centralization which means neither an increase of democracy nor political progress. The real issue is not one of this or the other theory of government; of this or that political party; of one conception of sovereignty or of the other; of forgotten States' rights or of triumphant nationalism; or even of democratic or antidemocratic ideals. It is the old, old question of whether our government shall be of, for, and by the people in fact as well as in theory, and whether, by following the present programme, we are making it more so or less. Is a democracy safe in assuming that the stronger "the government" the stronger the nation?

Political thinkers from Aristotle down have answered that question in the negative, and have given adherence to the principle that always government is best when it governs least. Buckle, in his study of the history of civilization, comes to the conclusion that practically no credit whatever can be given to government, as such, for the progress of European civilization. Governmental measures and activities, he says, have always been the result of social progress and not the cause of it.

Generalizing broadly, we may say that more governments have failed from excess of strength than from weakness. It is the nature of the state and one of those mystic laws of its being to seek power. In a democracy, as in a monarchy, power breeds power and the love of it; and by some law of accretion excess feeds on excess until you not only have the inevitable issue of whether the government is master or servant, but eventually it becomes so rigid, mechanical, top-heavy, and arbitrary, that the free play of the energies, enterprises, and liberties of men is checked.

This, more or less, is the story of all government, from the autocracies of the Cæsars to those of the Lenines and Mussolinis, and from the democracies of the Greek city-states to those of twentieth-century America.

It is a common phenomenon of history, as of life, to hold cheapest those things which are most real and hard-won. The right to govern ourselves seems to us so much a part of the natural order, and the idea that we actually

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practise it is so ingrained, that we forget the age-long, bitter fight which men waged and are elsewhere still waging to establish it. The political story of "the common man," through primitive family, tribe, village, hundred, or nation—with his witenagemotes, ephors, tribunes, comitia, bishops, guilds, communes, and endless devices to preserve his right to govern himself, on down through the dark periods of universal empire to the Wilsonian dream of universal democracy, could easily be written in terms of this struggle for those rights of self-government which are now beginning to slip away from us.

It may be true that history teaches us only that it teaches us nothing; but surely it is not without significance that the periods in which civilization flowered brightest were precisely those in which centralized government was at a minimum and self-government flourished most. We see this, for example, in the best days of the Hellenic civilization, and in the marvellous outburst of dynamic energy, enterprise, and cultural striving that marked the Renaissance—with its self-governing guilds, communes, and free cities. And illustrations from history could be repeated from the days of "Merrie England" on down. The reason, of course, is that these were periods in which the spirit of liberty had its freest play.

III

In these days of low political vitality it is rather the fashion to regard all talk of liberty as oratorical and poetical and beside the point, and its realities and potentialities are obscured by a deal of false thinking or no thinking at all. But for us to belittle the relation of government to personal liberty is to misconceive the very nature of democracy, or of our scheme of government. Indeed, the question whether we shall govern ourselves might well be resolved into that of how we can best protect and preserve our liberties.

This was the question uppermost in the minds of the founders. What the colonies feared most when they cast off the yoke of monarchy was the danger of leaving any governmental power loose and unrestrained and undefined. To guard their liberties they applied the idea of a separation of powers. They believed that men had certain inalienable rights, and they enumerated some of these as a bill of rights in their State and national constitutions. All these definitions and limitations, and the character of their governmental mechanism, aimed not at unduly strengthening the government but at limiting it, and so protecting the rights of the individual and his natural and civil liberties.

On the maintenance of these principles and devices rests our possibility to this day of governing ourselves. If we are to maintain them, the division of powers, the distribution of sovereignties, the rights of the States, and the functions of local government must be regarded as realities and zealously respected; for so far they undoubtedly represent the best political mechanism that mankind has yet devised for reconciling the sovereign rights and liberties of the individual with free and effective government.

If the democratic idea of self-government was not new with America, at least we gave it a practical application that was new to the world. Even if our fathers had not come by the idea through their experience in the lands from which they came, they would have evolved it by virtue of the circum-

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stances and necessities which confronted them in this New World. What they did evolve, in our State and Federal system, was a new and untried mechanism by which they believed the democratic dream of centuries could be realized and men could attain self-government if they wished it.

Our political history begins with a bitter struggle to realize this dream. Two contending forces fought for mastery then as they are fighting now: the one for centralized, the other for decentralized, political power. While it can hardly be said that we have two mutually repellent schools of reasoned thought on this subject, still, consciously and unconsciously, it represents a line of actual cleavage: to what extent shall "the people" govern or be governed? So far as our two great parties to-day divide on any issue going to the heart of government, it is still on this. One strong for the people, and the other strong for "the government"; one strong for "the king and the powers of the air," the other strong for its subjects and the powers of the earth.

The conflict between Hamilton and Jefferson sprang from impulses deep in the roots of time, and it still continues. The followers of the former favored a strong central government—almost a monarchy—not because they were lacking in love of country or hatred of tyranny, but because they mistrusted the ability of men to govern themselves and feared democracy. As late as 1804 we find John Adams convinced that "democracy will soon waste, exhaust, and murder itself, and cannot last long." Even Washington fears the effects of "the democratic virus getting into the body politic." Nevertheless it was this virus that inoculated the nation and made possible our prosperity; and it is still the one dynamic force in our national life. Our new school of insurgent historians has probably overstressed the idea that our great Constitution was conceived more in the fear than in the faith of democracy, and was unduly solicitous of the primordial rights of property and the rights of the upper classes; but, even if this be so, it was none the less the spirit of democracy that created our constitutional system and gave it vitality. It may have been born an aristocrat, but it was raised a democrat.

If the democratic principle won out, it was only after a fierce struggle; and the credit for its victory must go largely to Jefferson and his followers. He found "the people" of his times, as of ours, politically inert and indifferent, and he galvanized them into life. Himself an aristocrat and man of large property, it was his faith in the right and ability of "the common man" that shaped the course of our political history. The historic contests of both Jefferson and Jackson represented a conflict of fundamentals and turned on precisely the same deep issues implicit in our present-day problems of more government or less, of strong States or weak, of rights and liberties maintained or surrendered.

It is a shallow criticism which assumes that when we refer to the experience of the past or invoke allegiance to the principles of Jefferson or of the fathers, we are asserting that here are to be found formulas of government which alone can solve the political problems of our present era, in which everything human except human nature is more or less changed. But as stars by which to guide, their precepts and principles tried and true are as fixed and valid now as they were in days of old. The factors in the equation may have

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changed and multiplied enormously, but the principles to be applied to their solution have not changed. As Abraham Lincoln said, they "are the definitions and axioms of free society . . . applicable to all men at all times." It is not a question of intellectual allegiance to abstract principles, but of their intelligent application in the light of experience to the concrete problems of this hour. Shall we apply those of the school of Hamilton or of Jefferson?

IV

To-day the school of Hamilton is unquestionably in the ascendant. Centralization of power has proceeded at a pace that would have appalled even his most ardent followers. Evidences of this are patent enough. A mere catalogue of the new activities of the central government would fill this magazine; for, in addition to the functions contemplated by the founders, it now recognizes few limitations to the scope and range of either its powers or its undertakings. It not only regulates commerce on land and sea and sky as between the States, it regulates it intrinsically and within the States. It is itself in business as monopolist, competitor, and adventurer in a thousand lines: in manufacturing, banking, forestry, shipping, ship-building, aviation, irrigation, mining, warehousing, oil, power, etc., etc. It undertakes to regulate, control, supplement, or stifle competition. It attempts to shape the course and spirit of almost every variety of human enterprise. It dictates as to private finance and commerce at home and abroad. It directs and influences directly and indirectly, through subsidies and advice and the magic of actual or supposed power, the internal life and processes of every State. It builds roads, supervises industry, regulates or controls rates, prices, wages, factory conditions, hours of labor, vocational and cultural education, the care of our infants and mothers, and our meat and drink.

If we were to concede the desirability or even the necessity of most of these activities, we still could not afford to overlook their political effects and implications. Growing out of them we see, for instance, an increasing disposition to leave everything to the government, and to look upon it as the great regulator and almoner and ever-present help in time of trouble. We see our traditional spirit of local self-reliance grow weak, and a healthy popular political interest sink into apathy and indifference. Everybody "lies down" to "the government." A minimum of control gives way to a maximum of regulation.

With this comes a system of bureaucracy which always spells tyranny. The army of office-holders grows over five times as fast as the population, and our government becomes steadily the most costly, wasteful, and extravagant on the face of the earth. And the end is not yet! There are still unexploited fields—child and adult labor, education, the producer, the merchandiser, the consumer, the farmer, the press, the church. A live bureaucracy will be glad to bring them all under its jurisdiction. It will be glad to have the corn-grower, the cotton-grower, the wheat-grower walk into its trap. It may even be glad to encourage the popular impulse, always so easily aroused, for "the nationalization" of this, that, or the other, and for new forms of government ownership and fields of control. Now that the Federal courts have discovered that almost nothing is without a "public interest," and "due process of law" is a hammer instead of an anvil, all this can

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come easily enough if we grow lax and prefer being governed to governing ourselves.

The growth of a bureaucracy is always in inverse proportion to the decline of self-government. In our own case the number of these bureaus in recent years has multiplied like the locusts of Egypt. Each new progressive law seems to call for a new progressive bureau, which, under the guise of administration and regulation, proceeds to exercise in effect all the powers of government—legislative, executive, judicial: those very powers which our founders were so solicitous to keep separate. Experience shows that just as all bureaus tend to become wasteful, extravagant, and despotic, so by some law of their own being, as it were, they develop primary ends and rights of their own. Around them cluster an army of experts, agents, lobbyists, and outside organizations trying to shape, direct, and capture some of this bureaucratic power for their own private advantage or for that of their clients. Moreover, their activities are tremendously reflected in the operations of the Congress itself, which steadily tends to grow more and more subject to the very bureaus it has created. Their powers of publicity and propaganda, and the procurement of apparent popular support become too strong to permit Congress to abolish or defy them or refuse them appropriations. A really live bureau never dies.

But the real point is not that all this centralization and bureaucratic activity is to be out-of-hand condemned; the object is rather to illustrate how it necessarily tends to make government more arbitrary and remote and different from what the people think it is, until self-government and "consent of the governed" become political myths. By yielding supinely to these increases of power we are changing not alone the very character and substance of the government itself, but are more or less unwittingly permitting changes which are revolutionizing our constitutional system and doing violence to those principles of liberty and self-government of which so much has here been said.

One need but look, for example, at the latest actual or proposed amendments to the Constitution to see the truth of this. If the Fourteenth Amendment, in effect and by judicial construction "following the election returns," has succeeded in changing the force and temper of our theory of State and Federal limitations and thereby changing the whole course of our constitutional history, it remained for the Sixteenth Amendment to change, or at least make possible a change in the very character of Federal power. If the power to tax is the power to destroy, as we have so often found it to be, then the now unlimited power of the central government "to collect taxes on income from whatever source derived" puts all property and all enterprise at its mercy. It may declare what is or is not income and may take all or part of it and may make its claims retroactive. It may question your personal, domestic, or business relations. It may make you its tax-gatherer from others and follow you to the ends of the earth. It may make such classifications, gradations, and constructions as will compel different men living or dead to give up different proportions of their acquisitions. Under the new dispensation of the Supreme Court as to estate taxes, it may, by indirection, now dictate to the States what their laws of inheritance shall be. In short, here is a new power that came

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in without any one stopping to think it through, and which not only is one of taxation but of dictation and confiscation.

The same line of thought applies in such changes as those involved in the Eighteenth Amendment or in the proposed child-labor amendment, or in all that wide range of actual or proposed legislation concerned with giving the Federal Government control over education, marriage and divorce, the organization of corporations, or those many subjects which actually do seem to call for greater uniformity of law and administration. The ends aimed at in most of these cases everybody can approve; it is their deeper political aspects that should make us hesitate. Most of these matters had best be left to those processes of localized effort and self-government which our system of self-governing States makes possible. No central government can handle them in this vast land without becoming unduly bureaucratic and arbitrary and without becoming unduly overloaded and costly.

V

To visualize all this as simply an abstract question of "States' rights" is to miss the point. It is a question more of effectiveness than of rights, of how best to further and protect the right and power of men to govern themselves. To have united the thirteen colonies, with their divergent types and interests, their local prides and prejudices, and their differing social, political, and religious ideals, into one federated union was an accomplishment made possible only by recognizing and respecting those local differences and giving them full legal protection. This was the aim of most of the constitutional limitations and of the bill of rights. These diversities are to-day not less, but greater; and sound government should continue to recognize them. You can't think politically of "the people" as one solid, composite, homogeneous mass willing to take orders from one central master. There are too many vast sections, groups, classes, and parties, which differ too fundamentally in local and ancestral traditions, in social and economic outlook, and in their modes of life and living, to make them all fit happily into one Procrustean Federal bed.

In our Federal system these differences and divergencies, if respected, become mutually protective and a source of strength. Our diversification of interests and institutions geographically and socially is itself a guaranty of stability and of freedom, if you keep the powers of government reasonably diversified and close to their source and to their impact. Man is the product of his environment, and his government, to be effective, must be also. Human and local contacts, prides, and relations play a far bigger part than formal law in controlling our social or antisocial instincts, and are our most dynamic agencies for promoting political progress and stimulating healthy political activity. It is difficult at best to stimulate this, and when you make government so complicated and remote that no man can understand its operations and know even the faintest fraction of the laws and administrative agencies that govern him, he loses interest in politics or at best confines himself to blind party prejudices or allegiancies or to a mere sporting interest in party contests.

We are not fair to the States. The reformer, in his zeal and impatience for many desirable reforms, by concentrating on Washington has not been

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fair either to the actual or possible accomplishments of the States, and so has done much to help weaken both their power and their prestige. Experience shows that progressives would have done better to make the local unit a trial-ground for most of their reforms. Here results can be watched and charted at first hand. State constitutions are more easy of amendment; legislatures are closer to the people; and concentrations and abuses of power can more easily be checked.

Why lose faith in the State? Most of our great reforms and proposed changes in organic law to fit modern needs have been of State origin and should be left to State control. If the political mind and ingenuity of one State conceives of this or that possible change, it can put it to the test of experiment and the others can copy. If they do not all copy or cannot all agree, that is their right, and it should be respected. Not to respect it and to force it on them through the medium of a central government is a nullification of this right.

It is precisely here that unnecessary conflicts arise, like those involved in the Eighteenth Amendment and its attempted enforcement by the Federal Congress. One section or group of States undertakes to impose its views, its ideals, or its will upon other States. The call is made upon government to pass and enforce laws which prove unenforceable where they do not have the sanction of "the people's consent." It is all well enough to charge the people of States which don't want such laws with "nullification," but the truth is that, if such laws prove an inevitable nullity in operation, it is because good people feel that their fundamental and inalienable rights of self-government have been nullified by the States which thus try by force to impose their will on unwilling sisters.

In such cases men feel that violence has been done to the spirit which created the Union, and the natural instinct to exercise the right and liberty to govern themselves in such matters again asserts itself, and the law fails. We have seen this in the South, in the case of the Fifteenth Amendment, and we are seeing it everywhere in the case of the Eighteenth. And every law that fails because good people will not respect it or obey it is a bad law. You don't give it any special sanctity by putting it into the Constitution. People will feel that defiance of such a law is not an evidence of badness or of "nullification," but an assertion of freedom. Where people feel that they are governing themselves they will observe and enforce the laws of their own making.

VI

Our excessive centralization may have been due less to conscious design than to the play of natural forces and inadvertence. Because the individualistic American has always believed in a minimum of government, he has believed he has it. One cannot generalize the broad sweep of a century into a few feeble sentences, but roughly it may be said that the democracy which found itself with the triumphs of Jefferson and Jackson was, in a sense, more social and spiritual than political. It found expression in a triumphant individualism which entered fiercely, to be sure, into the joy of political battle, but for the most part devoted its energies more to conquering a virgin continent than to really thinking through very much about government. The States felt that the limits of Federal power were defined once for all by the Constitution

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and could not be materially extended except by amendment, and for more than a full century amendments were not in fashion. The men of that period were quite sure that they were governing themselves, and what they asked of government was chiefly to be let alone.

With the growth of the country a multitude of conditions combined, however, to make an increase of Federal power inevitable. The growth of railroads and new means of intercourse, the wide sweep of interstate business, the rise of cities and the industrial era, all conspired to strengthen the central government. The excessive individualism of our earlier history gave way to a feeling that the national government could best express the collective will of democracy. The various territories which became States and had few of the local prides and traditions of the original colonies naturally looked to the central government as the legitimate source of powers and of favors. A growing sense of social solidarity demanded that various wrongs and injustices which had largely gone politically unnoticed should now receive attention. Men talked of the greater socialization of wealth and of industry, and of the dangers of corporations, trusts, and a rising plutocracy. Everything seemed to call for regulation and for laws and laws and still more laws. To attain this by any processes of self-government or through the States seemed either impossible or too slow. Leaders preached the doctrine of "nationalism with a big stick," and the drive on Washington began—and we are only now beginning to sense the consequences.

All this was helped along by the great development of big business and its idea that its interests could best be served and protected by a strong central government. The intimate relations of business to tariffs, special franchises, special privileges, and what-not, and its impatience with the uncertainties, annoyances, and lack of uniformity in State laws and administration made this natural enough. Business preferred not to be governed at all, but if this was impossible it preferred one master to forty-eight. But just as business is now beginning to discover that it can and must throw off the incubus of excessive government by developing larger self-governing powers of its own, so likewise there are many other fields and social groupings wherein co-operative endeavor and more self-government from within could serve to check arbitrary government from without. Most of the reforms, changes, and ideals which the social sciences and liberal forces of the country evolve can be translated into effective results far better if their sanctions spring from below rather than from above.

And, in our national passion for standardization, don't let us magnify the importance of uniformity of laws. Where uniformity is essential, we may justly look to the Federal Government to give it; but in an infinite range of territory, divergence and difference and variety are both inevitable and desirable —in local customs, in social ideals and diversions, in taxes, in education, recreation, and what-not. Surely in all this vast area the only permissible government should be local self-government.

VII

In the final analysis most people who favor our increasing centralization of government do so because they lack faith in political democracy and its capacity to govern itself. They see Demos

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as ignorant, changeable, trivial, intolerant, politically inert, and given to the worship of many false and foolish idols; but there is no reason to despair of democracy politically if we look upon what it has done. Its record of accomplishment is too impressive. Why not recognize that it has made this great nation what it is; and that it has done more to free the spirit and the energies of men; more to protect religious freedom; more to establish the rights of women, of labor, of the poor; more to prevent social conflicts and stratifications; more to protect the rights of property and the security of acquisitions; and more for education, health, happiness, and the greatest good of the greatest number — than any other political power of all time?

Why, therefore, lose faith in it? Why not concentrate our energies more on its political guidance and on strengthening all those domestic, self-governing possibilities that are inherent in it, instead of concentrating so vehemently on trying to mass power in a central government? In these days, when the individual is lost in the mass, you can rouse his political instincts only by localizing them. He can't be interested in a government too complicated to understand, and he won't be interested in political issues that seem too remote from his local interests. We justly pin great faith in education, in free speech and a free press, as means for making the mind of the nation work and translate itself into "public opinion"; but when government becomes too strong and too delocalized, public opinion senses its political futility and becomes inert and ineffective. Walter Lippman, in his "Phantom Public," contends that "when public opinion attempts to govern directly it is either a failure or a tyranny." It may be so, but we need not too much confuse public opinion with political democracy, and, if you distribute and localize the governmental agencies through which public opinion in a democracy can politically express itself, it will be neither a failure nor a tyranny.

When all is said, the final test of the virtues of more government or of less turns on which is more conducive to our individual and collective liberties. Here is the crux of the whole matter. While no state can exist without restricting some liberties, no state can long endure without respecting all others. We surrender some liberties to make others safe, and some to make the state safe. Every law is in some degree a limitation of liberty, yet every law that unnecessarily limits it is one more step toward arbitrary government. And there is the eternal problem: how to reconcile liberty and government. The Spencerian formula that every man shall have freedom to do as he wills, provided he does not infringe the equal freedom of any other man, may not be entirely feasible in practice, but it is still to be respected in theory. Man will cheerfully surrender his liberties if convinced that to do so will serve the ends of human existence; but it is a decision that he himself must have the liberty to make, and it must call for no undue suppression of his natural instinct to govern himself.

Here lies the fatal defect of laws of sumptuary interference like prohibition. Men's grievance against prohibition is not that it restricts their drink, but that it restricts their liberty of decision to drink or not to drink. It invades a field in which men instinctively feel that their rights of self-government are sovereign. When the state tries to make my right and my wrong your right and

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your wrong, it violates this inalienable sovereignty and substitutes arbitrary government for self-government.

VIII

Finally, if my theme may be carried somewhat to extremes and given a slightly homiletic turn, it may be permissible to add that the ultimate test of whether we should or even can govern ourselves politically is determined by the extent or degree to which we can govern ourselves individually. A high order of self-government, in this sense, would certainly eliminate the most difficult problems and serious ills of all government and is an ideal to which the energies of society and of the state can well be directed. If reformers could only believe that most reforms must come from within, we should have fewer abortive efforts to obtain them through law. "The kingdom of good and evil" can never spring from a legal code. You could not contemplate the appalling dimensions and intricacies of this whole field of government without a feeling of despair and futility in trying either to comprehend it or to criticise it, if you did not remember that after all it deals only with you and me and by us is made what it is. If democracy is to succeed, it is because you and I remain democrats and recognize that its making is in our hands. If justice is to prevail, it is because *we* do justice. If liberty is to thrive, it is because *we* love liberty. If government is to be free, it is because *we* govern ourselves.

Furniture-Hunting in New England

BY ELEANOR BUTLER ROOSEVELT

Some years ago we bought an abandoned farm in Vermont. I suppose there may be some people who would not consider it one of the most beautiful and desirable places in the world, but it is just that to me. Its loneliness is one of its charms. No macadam roads encourage automobiles. Electric lights and telephones do not exist. We have learned not to be disturbed when a porcupine pads up and down at night on the piazza, or a family of chipmunks runs races on the roof. Around the garden is a wire fence strung with fluttering rags to keep deer from having first choice of the vegetables. It is not unusual to find well-defined bear-tracks in the dust of the road.

The white clapboarded house with green blinds is typical of New England. It stands on the side of a hill. On each side of the front door is an enormous sugar-maple, and in the back is an old apple-orchard bounded by a stone wall. Behind the orchard the ground drops steeply into the valley, beyond which rise the green, wooded slopes of Mount Pisgah.

It was great fun doing over the house. We needed a good deal of material, and got it in an unexpected way. While wandering about the country I had

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found another house, on the verge of tumbling down. Part of the roof was gone, but the heavy, panelled front door, with its old latch, still hung on its iron hinges; and the floor-boards, some of them eighteen inches wide, were in good condition. Although the stairs were crumbling, the banister-rail could be used. Best of all were two cast-iron fireplaces, or fireframes as they are called, one large and one small. They were exactly alike in detail. The design was charming. Brass ornaments and andirons were gone, but cranes for pots were still in the larger of the two.

All was grist that came to our mill. I made an offer for that house "as is," and bought it for forty dollars.

When we started furnishing, I decided to go around and see what I could pick up in the neighborhood. In that part of Vermont beautiful antiques are rarely to be found. What I hoped for were quaint chairs, spool-beds and drop-leaf tables of cherry or birch, eighty to a hundred years old. Although of no great value these would be thoroughly in keeping with our house.

That summer there was not a farm within a radius of twenty-five miles that I did not visit. Driven by Balocca, who was my husband's orderly during the War, our old Ford service-wagon "flew over the ground like a hunting-hound" from morning to night. Most of the farmers' wives were interested and amused that any one should want to buy their cast-off furniture.

Once we came to a cottage from which every one had apparently gone for the day. I peered through the window but saw no furniture of much consequence until I spied an old bureau painted with a decoration of grape-vines. Here was a real prize. Somehow we must find the owners.

We drove along the road and met a man with a team. I asked him who lived in the house we had just passed. He said it belonged to an old man who lived by himself, and who was off haying.

"Turn to the right at the next fork in the road and keep on a spell. You'll come to where he's working. His name is Abner Kingsford."

We took the right fork and kept on a good long spell before we saw any hay-fields. An old man with a white beard was driving a reaper at the other side of a wide meadow. I jumped out of the Ford and made my way toward him.

"Good day," I said.

No answer but a nod.

"Can you tell me if Mr. Abner Kingsford is working here?"

"Hey?"

I repeated my question.

"You'll hev to speak louder, lady. Sometimes I'm just a mite hard o' hearing."

I shouted in his ear. He shook his head. Somewhere I had heard that a high-pitched voice carries best. Drawing a long breath I shrilled at him like an angry parrot:

"Abner Kingsford! *Kingsford!*"

His brown face suddenly wrinkled into a beaming, toothless smile.

"I wuz born in '51," he said gently.

I went back to the car. For three hours we searched for Abner, and finally found him. He laid down his scythe, came to the edge of the road and stood with one foot on the running-board.

"Bureau? Seems to me I hev got a bureau with a kinda design on it. Sell it? Well, now, I don't know. I don't rightly know who that bureau belongs to. Seems like a fella who used to live with us sixteen—no—let's see—guess it

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must ha' been seventeen, years ago, asked me to keep it for him. I forget his name, but he might come back 'n' ask for it 'n' then where'd I be? No, ma'am, I couldn't sell that bureau. I just wouldn't know what to say about it afterward."

It was noon and so far we had not found any furniture. We ate some sandwiches, drank cool water from the nearest brook, and resumed our journey.

At the next house we came to I was allowed to go up into the attic. Crawling on my hands and knees under the eaves, I unearthed four beds with turned posts. Instead of having springs or slats, they had holes along the side-pieces through which ropes were threaded to support the mattresses. They were in good condition, although one of them had been painted the dark Venetian red of the barn.

"That was Old Man Jaycock's bed," the woman said. "We bought it at the auction when his things was sold. Bessie, that's my daughter, she's married and lives over Manchester way, she said she wouldn't sleep in it onless 'twas painted. Old Man Jaycock was kind of melancholy for a long time, and one night he up and took the cord out the bed and hung himself. That's the bed. It makes it kind of a curiosity, don't it?"

I hastily explained that, although I could use three beds, four would be too many, and Old Man Jaycock's bed was pushed back into the dark corner from which it had come.

"You might stop at Annie Robinson's and see if she'll sell you anything," the woman continued as we went down the steep stairs. "Two years ago she got a divorce from her husband. Robinson was no account in lots of ways; he drank and used to beat his wife about once in every so often, but he's a good hard worker when he's sober. Annie owns the farm, and now she has him back as hired man. It works lovely," she added with a sigh, "for now when he raises a row she discharges him and puts him out, and won't take him back till he quiets down."

Just as I was getting into the car she called out: "If you want any real antique furniture, find the widow of the man who fell off the roof!"

It sounded like a detective story.

"Where?" I asked.

"Oh, down Stratton way. She's selling her things, and she has lots of furniture. I forget her name."

We were on the Stratton road, so we continued. At an imposing-looking large house set back from the road, where I really hesitated to stop, they sold me half their piazza chairs. I asked: "Have you happened to hear of a man around here who had an accident some time ago? He fell off a roof, I believe."

"Oh, yes! Sure! He's dead. What was his name, now? His widow sells furniture. That's where you ought to go. It'll help her out, too. Just ask as you go along. Anybody'll tell you."

We drove for miles without seeing so much as a barn, and finally met a boy sauntering down the road, whistling. We stopped, passed the time of day and inquired: "Do you know of any one who has furniture to sell?"

"Yes, ma'am! The lady whose husband fell off the roof a coupler years ago has a lot o' junk she's gettin' rid of.—Ye ain't seen a loose critter anywheres along here, hev ye?"

Strange as it may seem we actually found her, and bought most of her stock. The way we loaded that poor Ford was a shame. We already had three beds and five chairs. To these were added two bureaus, three good-

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sized tables, four rocking-chairs, some large picture-frames, two lamps, and a set of glass dishes. This had indeed been a successful day.

Gradually, as the summer went on, we collected enough furniture for the farmhouse. With the help of Balocca, I refinished many of the pieces. He used paint-remover and strong lye, while I sandpapered and polished with oil and pumice until my arms nearly dropped off.

I thought we had covered the ground pretty thoroughly, so I was surprised one day to come across a house we had apparently overlooked. From the outside it was like countless others in New England, but here the resemblance ceased. Inside there was none of the characteristic prim neatness.

A slatternly woman, with two children clinging to her skirt, opened the door. The tiny passage smelled of rotten apples, rancid bacon, and mice. Everything was in disorder, but here and there I caught astonishing glimpses of really good furniture. In the kitchen a beautiful, walnut "thousand-legged" table was littered with dirty breakfast-dishes covered with flies. Up-stairs dingy sheets trailed from a delicately carved mahogany four-post bed. On either side of the bed stood a pair of small drop-leaf tables with claw feet, their tops streaked and spotted with layers of candle-grease. In another room I saw a walnut low-boy on which lay a dish with a half-eaten piece of pie, crawling with ants.

The woman said: "These things are his—my husband's. No, I don't know where they came from. Maybe he'll sell; I don't know. He's working on a cement bridge down the road a piece. You could ask him."

Here was something really worth while. Without waiting to see what other treasures the untidy little house contained, I hurried down the road to find the husband. We came to the bridge, where half a dozen men were working. Balocca went ahead and spoke to them. Presently a man separated himself from the others and slouched leisurely across the road. This was not at all a New England type. He must have moved into the country; he certainly did not belong here. I tried my best to persuade him to part with even one of his pieces. That thousand-legged table was hard to leave behind. He listened, watching me with a furtive and somewhat hostile air. His answer was in just two words.

"We-ell, no."

That was all. I gave him my address in case he should change his mind. He took it in silence and turned away. Disappointed at being able neither to solve the mystery nor buy the furniture, I drove home.

Autumn came, and we prepared to leave Vermont to return to Oyster Bay. There was a great bustle of "putting-away." Flat stones were placed over the chimneys to keep out snow; mattresses and pillows were hung from the rafters out of reach of mice. In the midst of it came a note from my friend of the cement bridge. He had changed his mind, and wanted to sell his furniture.

"Oh, well," I said, "there's no time to do anything now. Next year I'll drive over there and see about it."

But when next summer came I had lost his letter and forgotten his name. I searched the country for miles around and explored every road, but, incredible as it sounds, I could never again find the little house upon which I had accidentally stumbled. Apparently, no one else had ever "heard tell of it." It had gone, with its lovely furniture, as things vanish in a dream.

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The Greene Murder Case

A PHILO VANCE STORY

BY S. S. VAN DINE
Author of "The Benson Murder Case" and "The 'Canary' Murder Case"

SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS:—In the old Greene mansion on 53d Street, by the East River, live Mrs. Tobias Greene, who is a paralytic, and her five grown children—two daughters (Julia and Sibella), two sons (Chester and Rex), and an adopted daughter (Ada). At half past eleven on the night of November 8 Julia and Ada are shot in their bedrooms. Julia is killed instantly, but Ada, though wounded in the back, recovers. The police take up the investigation; and Markham, the District Attorney, is also called into the case. Markham is accompanied by his intimate friend, Philo Vance, a young social aristocrat who has helped him unofficially in other investigations. Three nights after Julia's death Chester is shot through the heart while sitting in his bedroom; and three weeks later Rex, as he is about to leave the house to give information to the District Attorney, is also shot down. A few days afterward Ada is found poisoned with morphine, but recovers under the ministrations of a police physician. That same night Mrs. Greene dies as a result of strychnine poisoning.

XXI

A DEPLETED HOUSEHOLD

(Friday, December 3; forenoon)

MARKHAM brought us the news of Mrs. Greene's death before ten o'clock the next morning. The tragedy had not been discovered until nine, when the nurse brought up her patient's morning tea. Heath had notified Markham, and Markham had stopped on his way to the Greene mansion to apprise Vance of the new development. Vance and I had already breakfasted, and we accompanied him to the house.

"This knocks out our only prop," Markham said despondently, as we sped up Madison Avenue. "The possibility that the old lady was guilty was frightful to contemplate; though all along I've been trying to console myself with the thought that she was insane. Now, however, I almost wish our suspicions had proved true, for the possibilities that are left seem even more terrible. We're dealing now with a cold-blooded calculating rationality."

Vance nodded.

"Yes, we're confronted with something far worse than mania. I can't say, though, that I'm deeply shocked by Mrs. Greene's death. She was a detestable woman, Markham—a most detestable woman. The world will not bemoan her loss."

Vance's comment expressed exactly the sentiment I had felt when Markham informed us of Mrs. Greene's death. The news had of course shaken me, but I had no pity for the victim. She had been vicious and unnatural; she had thriven on hatred, and had made life a hell for every one about her. It was better that her existence was over.

Both Heath and Drumm were wait-

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ing for us in the drawing-room. Excitement and depression were mingled in the Sergeant's countenance, and the desperation of despair shone in his china-blue eyes. Drumm revealed only a look of professional disappointment: his chief concern apparently was that he had been deprived of an opportunity to display his medical skill.

Heath, after shaking hands absently, briefly explained the situation.

"O'Brien found the old dame dead at nine this morning, and told Sproot to wigwag to Doc Drumm. Then she phoned the Bureau, and I notified you and Doc Doremus. I got here fifteen or twenty minutes ago, and locked up the room."

"Did you inform Von Blon?" Markham asked.

"I phoned him to call off the examination he'd arranged for ten o'clock. Said I'd communicate with him later, and hung up before he had time to ask any questions."

Markham indicated his approval and turned toward Drumm.

"Give us your story, doctor."

Drumm drew himself up, cleared his throat, and assumed an attitude calculated to be impressive.

"I was down-stairs in the Narcoss dining-room eating breakfast when Hennessey came in and told me the curtains had gone down in the reception-room here. So I snatched my outfit and came over on the run. The butler took me to the old lady's room, where the nurse was waiting. But right away I saw I was too late to be of any good. She was dead—contorted, blue, and cold—and *rigor mortis* had set in. Died of a big dose of strychnine. Probably didn't suffer much—exhaustion and coma came inside of half an hour, I'd say. Too old, you understand, to throw it off. Old people succumb to strychnine pretty swiftly. . . ."

"What about her ability to cry out and give the alarm?"

"You can't tell. The spasm may have rendered her mute. Anyway, no one heard her. Probably passed into unconsciousness after the first seizure. My experience with such cases has taught me——"

"What time would you say the strychnine was taken?"

"Well, now, you can't tell exactly." Drumm became oracular. "The convulsions may have been prolonged before death supervened, or death may have supervened very shortly after the poison was swallowed."

"At what hour, then, would you fix the time of death?"

"There again you can't say definitely. Confusion between *rigor mortis* and the phenomenon of cadaveric spasm is a pitfall into which many doctors fall. There are, however, distinct points of dissimilarity——"

"No doubt." Markham was growing impatient with Drumm's sophomoric pedantries. "But leaving all explanation to one side, what time do you think Mrs. Greene died?"

Drumm pondered the point.

"Roughly, let us say, at two this morning."

"And the strychnine might have been taken as early as eleven or twelve?"

"It's possible."

"Anyhow, we'll know about it when Doc Doremus gets here," asserted Heath with brutal frankness. He was in vicious mood that morning.

"Did you find any glass or cup by which the drug might have been administered, doctor?" Markham hastened to ask, by way of covering up Heath's remark.

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"There was a glass near the bed with what appeared to be sulphate crystals adhering to the sides of it."

"But wouldn't a fatal dose of strychnine make an ordin'ry drink noticeably bitter?" Vance had suddenly become alert.

"Undoubtedly. But there was a bottle of citrocarbonate—a well-known antacid—on the night-table; and if the drug had been taken with this, the taste would not have been detected. Citrocarbonate is slightly saline and highly effervescing."

"Could Mrs. Greene have taken the citrocarbonate alone?"

"It's not likely. It has to be carefully mixed with water, and the operation would be highly awkward for any one in bed."

"Now, that's most interestin'." Vance listlessly lighted a cigarette. "We may presume, therefore, that the person who gave Mrs. Greene the citrocarbonate also administered the strychnine." He turned to Markham. "I think Miss O'Brien might be able to help us."

Heath went at once and summoned the nurse.

But her evidence was unilluminating. She had left Mrs. Greene reading about eleven o'clock, had gone to her own room to make her toilet for the night, and had returned to Ada's room half an hour later, where she had slept all night, according to Heath's instructions. She had risen at eight, dressed, and gone to the kitchen to fetch Mrs. Greene's tea. As far as she knew, Mrs. Greene had drunk nothing before retiring—certainly she had taken no citrocarbonate up to eleven o'clock. Furthermore, Mrs. Greene never attempted to take it alone.

"You think, then," asked Vance, "that it was given to her by some one else?"

"You can bank on it," the nurse assured him bluntly. "If she'd wanted it, she'd have raised the house before mixing it herself."

"It's quite obvious," Vance observed to Markham, "that some one entered her room after eleven o'clock and prepared the citrocarbonate."

Markham got up and walked anxiously about the room.

"Our immediate problem boils down to finding out who had the opportunity to do it," he said. "You, Miss O'Brien, may return to your room. . . ." Then he went to the bell-cord and rang for Sproot.

During a brief interrogation of the butler the following facts were brought out:

The house had been locked up, and Sproot had retired, at about half past ten.

Sibella had gone to her room immediately after dinner, and had remained there.

Hemming and the cook had lingered in the kitchen until shortly after eleven, at which time Sproot had heard them ascend to their rooms.

The first intimation Sproot had of Mrs. Greene's death was when the nurse sent him to draw the reception-room shades at nine that morning.

Markham dismissed him and sent for the cook. She was, it appeared, unaware of Mrs. Greene's death and of Ada's poisoning as well; and what evidence she had to give was of no importance. She had, she said, been in the kitchen or in her own room practically all of the preceding day.

Hemming was interviewed next. From the nature of the questions put to her she became suspicious almost at once. Her piercing eyes narrowed, and she gave us a look of shrewd triumph.

"You can't hoodwink me," she burst out. "The Lord's been busy with his besom again. And a good thing, too! 'The Lord preserveth all them that love

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him: but all the wicked shall he destroy.' "

"'Will,' " corrected Vance. "And seeing that you have been so tenderly preserved, perhaps we had better inform you that both Miss Ada and Mrs. Greene have been poisoned."

He was watching the woman closely, but it took no scrutiny to see her cheeks go pale and her jaw sag. The Lord had evidently been too precipitously devastating even for this devout disciple; and her faith was insufficient to counteract her fear.

"I'm going to leave this house," she declared faintly. "I've seen enough to bear witness for the Lord."

"An excellent idea," nodded Vance. "And the sooner you go the more time you'll have to give apocryphal testimony."

Hemming rose, a bit dazed, and started for the archway. Then she quickly turned back and glared at Markham maliciously.

"But let me tell you something before I pass from the den of iniquity. That Miss Sibella is the worst of the lot, and the Lord is going to strike her down next—mark my words! There's no use to try and save her. She's—*doomed!*"

Vance lifted his eyebrows languidly.

"I say, Hemming, what unrighteousness has Miss Sibella been up to now?"

"The usual thing." The woman spoke with relish. "She's nothing but a hussy, if you ask me. Her carryings-on with this Doctor Von Blon have been scandalous. They're together, as thick as thieves, at all hours." She nodded her head significantly. "He came here again last night and went to her room. There's no telling what time he left."

"Fancy that, now. And how do you happen to know about it?"

"Didn't I let him in?"

"Oh, you did?—What time was this? And where was Sproot?"

"Mr. Sproot was eating his dinner, and I'd gone to the front door to take a look at the weather when the doctor walks up. 'Howdy-do, Hemming?' he says with his oily smile. And he brushes past me, nervouslike, and goes straight to Miss Sibella's room."

"Perhaps Miss Sibella was indisposed, and sent for him," suggested Vance indifferently.

"Huh!" Hemming tossed her head contemptuously, and strode from the room.

Vance rose at once and rang again for Sproot.

"Did you know Doctor Von Blon was here last night?" he asked when the butler appeared.

The man shook his head.

"No, sir. I was quite unaware of the fact."

"That's all, Sproot. And now please tell Miss Sibella we'd like to see her."

"Yes, sir."

It was fifteen minutes before Sibella put in an appearance.

"I'm beastly lazy these days," she explained, settling herself in a large chair. "What's the party for this morning?"

Vance offered her a cigarette with an air half quizzical and half deferential.

"Before we explain our presence," he said, "please be good enough to tell us what time Doctor Von Blon left here last night?"

"At a quarter of eleven," she answered, a hostile challenge coming into her eyes.

"Thank you. And now I may tell you that both your mother and Ada have been poisoned."

"Mother and Ada poisoned?" She echoed the words vaguely, as if they were only half intelligible to her; and

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for several moments she sat motionless, staring stonily out of flintlike eyes. Slowly her gaze became fixed on Markham.

"I think I'll take your advice," she said. "I have a girl chum in Atlantic City. . . . This place is really becoming too, too creepy." She forced a faint smile. "I'm off for the seashore this afternoon." For the first time the girl's nerve seemed to have deserted her.

"Your decision is very wise," observed Vance. "Go, by all means; and arrange to stay until we have settled this affair."

She looked at him in a spirit of indulgent irony.

"I'm afraid I can't stay so long," she said; then added: "I suppose mother and Ada are both dead."

"Only your mother," Vance told her. "Ada recovered."

"She would!" Every curve of her features expressed a fine arrogant contempt. "Common clay has great resistance, I've heard. You know, I'm the only one standing between her and the Greene millions now."

"Your sister had a very close call," Markham reprimanded her. "If we had not had a doctor on guard, you might now be the sole remaining heir to those millions."

"And that would look frightfully suspicious, wouldn't it?" Her question was disconcertingly frank. "But you may rest assured that if *I* had planned this affair, little Ada would not have recovered."

Before Markham could answer she switched herself out of the chair.

"Now, I'm going to pack. Enough is enough."

When she had left the room, Heath looked with doubtful inquisitiveness at Markham.

"What about it, sir? Are you going to let her leave the city? She's the only one of the Greenes who hasn't been touched."

We knew what he meant; and this spoken suggestion of the thought that had been passing through all our minds left us silent for a moment.

"We can't take the chance of forcing her to stay here," Markham returned finally. "If anything should happen . . ."

"I get you, sir." Heath was on his feet. "But I'm going to see that she's tailed—believe me! I'll get two good men up here who'll stick to her from the time she goes out that front door till we know where we stand." He went into the hall, and we heard him giving orders to Snitkin over the telephone.

Five minutes later Doctor Doremus arrived. He was no longer jaunty, and his greeting was almost sombre. Accompanied by Drumm and Heath he went at once to Mrs. Greene's room, while Markham and Vance and I waited down-stairs. When he returned at the end of fifteen minutes he was markedly subdued, and I noticed he did not put on his hat at its usual rakish angle.

"What's the report?" Markham asked him.

"Same as Drumm's. The old girl passed out, I'd say, between one and two."

"And the strychnine was taken when?"

"Midnight, or thereabouts. But that's only a guess. Anyway, she got it along with the citrocarbonate. I tasted it on the glass."*

"By the by, doctor," said Vance, "when you do the autopsy can you let

* It will be remembered that in the famous Molineux poisoning case the cyanide of mercury was administered by way of a similar drug—to wit: Bromo-Seltzer.

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us have a report on the state of atrophy of the leg muscles?"

"Sure thing." Doremus was somewhat surprised by the request.

When he had gone, Markham addressed himself to Drumm.

"We'd like to talk to Ada now. How is she this morning?"

"Oh, fine!" Drumm spoke with pride. "I saw her right after I'd looked at the old lady. She's weak and a bit dried up with all the atropine I gave her, but otherwise practically normal."

"And she has not been told of her mother's death?"

"Not a word."

"She will have to know," interposed Vance; "and there's no point in keeping the fact from her any longer. It's just as well that the shock should come when we're all present."

Ada was sitting by the window when we came in, her elbows on the sill, chin in hands, gazing out into the snow-covered yard. She was startled by our entry, and the pupils of her eyes dilated, as if with sudden fright. It was plain that the experiences she had been through had created in her a state of nervous fear.

After a brief exchange of amenities, during which both Vance and Markham strove to allay her nervousness, Markham broached the subject of the bouillon.

"We'd give a great deal," he said, "not to have to recall so painful an episode, but much depends on what you can tell us regarding yesterday morning.—You were in the drawing-room, weren't you, when the nurse called down to you?"

The girl's lips and tongue were dry, and she spoke with some difficulty.

"Yes. Mother had asked me to bring her a copy of a magazine, and I had just gone down-stairs to look for it when the nurse called."

"You saw the nurse when you came up-stairs?"

"Yes; she was just going toward the servants' stairway."

"There was no one in your room here when you entered?"

She shook her head. "Who could have been here?"

"That's what we're trying to find out, Miss Greene," replied Markham gravely. "Some one certainly put the drug in your bouillon."

She shuddered, but made no reply.

"Did any one come in to see you later?" Markham continued.

"Not a soul."

Heath impatiently projected himself into the interrogation.

"And say; did you drink your soup right away?"

"No—not right away. I felt a little chilly, and I went across the hall to Julia's room to get an old Spanish shawl to put round me."

Heath made a disgusted face, and sighed noisily.

"Every time we get going on this case," he complained, "something comes along and sinks us.—If Miss Ada left the soup in here, Mr. Markham, while she went to get a shawl, then almost anybody coulda sneaked in and poisoned the stuff."

"I'm so sorry," Ada apologized, almost as though she had taken Heath's words as a criticism of her actions.

"It's not your fault, Ada," Vance assured her. "The Sergeant is unduly depressed.—But tell me this: when you went into the hall did you see Miss Sibella's dog anywhere around?"

She shook her head wonderingly.

"Why, no. What has Sibella's dog to do with it?"

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"He probably saved your life." And Vance explained to her how Sproot had happened to find her.

She gave a half-breathless murmur of amazement and incredulity, and fell into abstracted revery.

"When you returned from your sister's room, did you drink your bouillon at once?" Vance asked her next.

With difficulty she brought her mind back to the question.

"Yes."

"And didn't you notice a peculiar taste?"

"Not particularly. Mother always likes a lot of salt in her bouillon."

"And then what happened?"

"Nothing happened. Only, I began to feel funny. The back of my neck tightened up, and I got very warm and drowsy. My skin tingled all over, and my arms and legs seemed to get numb. I was terribly sleepy, and I lay back on the bed.—That's all I remember."

"Another washout," grumbled Heath.

There was a short silence, and Vance drew his chair nearer.

"Now, Ada," he said, "you must brace yourself for more bad news. . . . Your mother died during the night."

The girl sat motionless for a moment, and then turned to him eyes of a despairing clearness.

"Died?" she repeated. "How did she die?"

"She was poisoned—she took an overdose of strychnine."

"You mean . . . she committed suicide?"

This query startled us all. It expressed a possibility that had not occurred to us. After a momentary hesitation, however, Vance slowly shook his head.

"No, I hardly think so. I'm afraid the person who poisoned you also poisoned your mother."

Vance's reply seemed to stun her. Her face grew pale, and her eyes were set in a glassy stare of terror. Then presently she sighed deeply, as if from a kind of mental depletion.

"Oh, what's going to happen next? . . . I'm—afraid!"

"Nothing more is going to happen," said Vance with emphasis. "Nothing more *can* happen. You are going to be guarded every minute. And Sibella is going this afternoon to Atlantic City for a long visit."

"I wish I could go away," she breathed pathetically.

"There will be no need of that," put in Markham. "You'll be safer in New York. We are going to keep the nurse here to look after you, and also put a man in the house day and night until everything is straightened out. Hemming is leaving to-day, but Sproot and the cook will take care of you." He rose and patted her shoulder comfortingly. "There's no possible way any one can harm you now."

As we descended into the lower hall Sproot was just admitting Doctor Von Blon.

"Good God!" he exclaimed, hastening toward us. "Sibella just phoned me about Mrs. Greene." He looked truculently at Markham, his suavity for the moment forgotten. "Why wasn't I informed, sir?"

"I saw no necessity of bothering you, doctor," Markham returned equably. "Mrs. Greene had been dead several hours when she was found. And we had our own doctor at hand."

A quick flame leaped in Von Blon's eyes.

"And am I to be forcibly kept from seeing Sibella?" he asked coldly. "She tells me she is leaving the city to-day, and has asked me to assist with her arrangements."

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Markham stepped aside.

"You are free, doctor, to do whatever you desire," he said, a perceptible chill in his voice.

Von Blon bowed stiffly, and went up the stairs.

"He's sore," grinned Heath.

"No, Sergeant," Vance corrected. "He's worried—oh, deuced worried."

Shortly after noon that day Hemming departed forever from the Greene mansion; and Sibella took the three-fifteen o'clock train for Atlantic City. Of the original household, only Ada and Sproot and Mrs. Mannheim were left. However, Heath gave orders for Miss O'Brien to remain on duty indefinitely and keep an eye on everything that happened; and, in addition to this protection, a detective was stationed in the house to augment the nurse's watch.

XXII

THE SHADOWY FIGURE

(Friday, December 3; 6 p. m.)

At six o'clock that evening Markham called another informal conference at the Stuyvesant Club. Not only were Inspector Moran and Heath present, but Chief Inspector O'Brien* dropped in on his way home from the office.

The afternoon papers had been merciless in their criticism of the police for its unsuccessful handling of the investigation. Markham, after consulting with Heath and Doremus, had explained the death of Mrs. Greene to the reporters as "the result of an overdose of strychnine—a stimulant she had been taking regularly under her physician's orders." Swacker had typed copies of the item so there would be no mistake as to its exact wording; and the announcement ended by saying: "There is no evidence to show that the drug was not self-administered as the result of error." But although the reporters composed their news stories in strict accord with Markham's report, they interpolated subtle intimations of deliberate murder, so that the reader was left with little doubt as to the true state of affairs. The unsuccessful attempt to poison Ada had been kept a strict official secret. But this suppressed item had not been needed to inflame the public's morbid imagination to an almost unprecedented degree.

Both Markham and Heath had begun to show the strain of their futile efforts to solve the affair; and one glance at Inspector Moran, as he sank heavily into a chair beside the District Attorney, was enough to make one realize that a corroding worry had undermined his habitual equanimity. Even Vance revealed signs of tensity and uneasiness; but with him it was an eager alertness, rather than worry, that marked any deviation from normality in his attitude.

As soon as we were assembled that evening Heath briefly epitomized the case. He went over the various lines of investigation, and enumerated the precautions that had been taken. When he had finished, and before any one could make a comment, he turned to Chief Inspector O'Brien and said:

"There's plenty of things, sir, we might've done in any ordinary case. We could've searched the house for the gun and the poison like the narcotic squad goes through a single room or small apartment—punching the mattresses, tearing up the carpets, and sounding the woodwork—but in the Greene house it would've taken a coupla months. And even if we'd found the stuff, what good would it have done us? The guy that's

* Chief Inspector O'Brien, who was in command of the entire Police Department, was, I learned later, an uncle of the Miss O'Brien who was acting officially as nurse at the Greene mansion.

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tearing things wide open in that dump isn't going to stop just because we take his dinky thirty-two away from him, or grab his poison.—After Chester or Rex was shot we could've arrested all the rest of the family and put 'em through a third degree. But there's too much noise in the papers now every time we give anybody the works; and it ain't exactly healthy for us to grill a family like the Greenes. They've got too much money and pull; they'd have had a whole battalion of high-class lawyers smearing us with suits and injunctions and God knows what. And if we'd just held 'em as material witnesses, they'd have got out in forty-eight hours on *habeas-corpus* actions.—Then, again, we might've planted a bunch of huskies in the house. But we couldn't keep a garrison there indefinitely and the minute they'd have been called off, the dirty work would've begun.—Believe me, Inspector, we've been up against it good and plenty."

O'Brien grunted and tugged at his white cropped mustache.

"What the Sergeant says is perfectly true," Moran remarked. "Most of the ordinary methods of action and investigation have been denied us. We're obviously dealing with an inside family affair."

"Moreover," added Vance, "we're dealing with an extr'ordin'rily clever plot—something that has been thought out and planned down to the minutest detail, and elaborately covered up at every point. Everything has been staked—even life itself—on the outcome. Only a supreme hatred and an exalted hope could have inspired the crimes. And against such attributes, d' ye see, the ordin'ry means of prevention are utterly useless."

"A family affair!" repeated O'Brien heavily, who apparently was still pondering over Inspector Moran's statement. "It don't look to me as though there's much of the family left. I'd say, on the evidence, that some outsider was trying to wipe the family out." He gave Heath a glowering look. "What have you done about the servants? You're not scared to monkey with *them*, are you? You could have arrested one of 'em a long time ago and stopped the yapping of the newspapers for a time, anyway."

Markham came immediately to Heath's defense.

"I'm wholly responsible for any seeming negligence on the Sergeant's part in that regard," he said with a noticeable accent of cold reproach. "As long as I have anything to say about this case no arrests are going to be made for the mere purpose of quieting unpleasant criticism." Then his manner relaxed slightly. "There isn't the remotest indication of guilt in connection with any of the servants. The maid Hemming is a harmless fanatic, and is quite incapable mentally of having planned the murders. I permitted her to leave the Greenes' to-day. . . ."

"We know where to find her, Inspector," Heath hastened to add by way of forestalling the other's inevitable question.

"As to the cook," Markham went on; "she, too, is wholly outside of any serious consideration. She's temperamentally unfitted to be cast in the rôle of murderer."

"And what about the butler?" asked O'Brien acrimoniously.

"He's been with the family thirty years, and was even remembered liberally in Tobias Greene's will. He's a bit queer, but I think if he had had any

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reason for destroying the Greenes he wouldn't have waited till old age came on him." Markham looked troubled for a moment. "I must admit, however, that there's an atmosphere of mysterious reserve about the old fellow. He always gives me the impression of knowing far more than he admits."

"What you say, Markham, is true enough," remarked Vance. "But Sproot certainly doesn't fit this particular saturnalia of crime. He reasons too carefully; there's an immense cautiousness about the man, and his mental outlook is highly conservative. He might stab an enemy if there was no remote chance of detection. But he lacks the courage and the imaginative resiliency that have made possible this present gory debauch. He's too old—much too old. . . . By Jove!"

Vance leaned over and tapped the table with an incisive gesture.

"That's the thing that's been evading me! Vitality! That's what is at the bottom of this business—a tremendous, elastic, self-confident vitality: a supreme ruthlessness mingled with audacity and impudence—an intrepid and reckless egoism—an undaunted belief in one's own ability. And they're not the components of age. There's youth in all this—youth with its ambition and venturesomeness—that doesn't count the cost, that takes no thought of risk. . . . No. Sproot could never qualify."

Moran shifted his chair uneasily, and turned to Heath.

"Whom did you send to Atlantic City to watch Sibella?"

"Guilfoyle and Mallory—the two best men we've got."* The Sergeant smiled with a kind of cruel satisfaction.

"She won't get away. And she won't pull anything, either."

"And have you extended your attention to Doctor Von Blon, by any chance?" negligently asked Vance.

Again Heath's canny smile appeared.

"He's been tailed ever since Rex was shot."

Vance regarded him admiringly.

"I'm becoming positively fond of you, Sergeant," he said; and beneath his chaffing note was the ring of sincerity.

O'Brien leaned ponderously over the table and, brushing the ashes from his cigar, fixed a sullen look on the District Attorney.

"What was this story you gave out to the papers, Mr. Markham? You seemed to want to imply that the old woman took the strychnine herself. Was that hogwash, or was there something in it?"

"I'm afraid there was nothing in it, Inspector." Markham spoke with a sense of genuine regret. "Such a theory doesn't square with the poisoning of Ada—or with any of the rest of it, for that matter."

"I'm not so sure," retorted O'Brien. "Moran here has told me that you fellows had an idea the old woman was faking her paralysis." He rearranged his arms on the table and pointed a short thick finger at Markham. "Supposing she shot three of the children, using up all the cartridges in the revolver, and then stole the two doses of poison—one for each of the two girls left; and then supposing she gave the morphine to the younger one, and had only one dose left. . . ." He paused and squinted significantly.

"I see what you mean," said Markham. "Your theory is that she didn't count on our having a doctor handy to save Ada's life, and that, having failed

* I recalled that Guilfoyle and Mallory were the two men who had been set to watch Tony Skeel in the Canary murder case.

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to put Ada out of the way, she figured the game was up, and took the strychnine."

"That's it!" O'Brien struck the table with his fist. "And it makes sense. Furthermore, it means we've cleared up the case—see?"

"Yes, it unquestionably makes sense." It was Vance's quiet, drawling voice that answered. "But forgive me if I suggest that it fits the facts much too tidily. It's a perfect theory, don't y' know; it leaps to the brain, almost as though some one had planned it for our benefit. I rather fancy that we're intended to adopt that very logical and sensible point of view. But really now, Inspector, Mrs. Greene was not the suicidal type, however murderous she may have been."

While Vance had been speaking, Heath had left the room. A few minutes later he returned and interrupted O'Brien in a long, ill-natured defense of his suicide theory.

"We haven't got to argue any more along that line," he announced. "I've just had Doc Doremus on the phone. He's finished the autopsy; and he says that the old lady's leg muscles had wasted away—gone plumb flabby—and that there wasn't a chance in the world of her moving her legs, let alone walking on 'em."

"Good God!" Moran was the first to recover from the amazement this news had caused us. "Who was it, then, that Ada saw in the hall?"

"That's just it!" Vance spoke hurriedly, trying to stem his rising sense of excitation. "If only we knew! That's the answer to the whole problem. It may not have been the murderer; but the person who sat in that library night after night and read strange books by candlelight is the key to everything. . . ."

"But Ada was so positive in her identification," objected Markham, in a bewildered tone.

"She's hardly to be blamed in the circumstances," Vance returned. "The child had been through a frightful experience and was scarcely normal. And it is not at all unlikely that she, too, suspected her mother. If she did, what would have been more natural than for her to imagine that this shadowy figure she saw in the hall long after midnight was the actual object of her dread? It is not unusual for a person under the stress of fright to distort an object by the projection of a dominating mental image."

"You mean," said Heath, "that she saw somebody else, and imagined it was her mother because she was thinking so hard of the old woman?"

"It's by no means improbable."

"Still, there was that detail of the Oriental shawl," objected Markham. "Ada might easily have mistaken the person's features, but her insistence on having seen that particular shawl was fairly definite."

Vance gave a perplexed nod.

"The point is well taken. And it may prove the Ariadne's clew that will lead us out of this Cretan labyrinth. We must find out more about that shawl."

Heath had taken out his note-book and was turning the pages with scowling concentration.

"And don't forget, Mr. Vance," he said, without looking up, "about that diagram Ada found in the rear of the hall near the library door. Maybe this person in the shawl was the one who'd dropped it, and was going to the library to look for it, but got scared off when she saw Ada."

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"But whoever shot Rex," said Markham, "evidently stole the paper from him, and therefore wouldn't be worrying about it."

"I guess that's right," Heath admitted reluctantly.

"Such speculation is futile," commented Vance. "This affair is too complicated to be untangled by the unravelling of details. We must determine, if possible, who it was that Ada saw that night. Then we'll have opened a main artery of inquiry."

"How are we going to find that out," demanded O'Brien, "when Ada was the only person who saw this woman in Mrs. Greene's shawl?"

"Your question contains the answer, Inspector. We must see Ada again and try to counteract the suggestion of her own fears. When we explain that it couldn't have been her mother, she may recall some other point that will put us on the right track."

And this was the course taken. When the conference ended, O'Brien departed, and the rest of us dined at the club. At half past eight we were on our way to the Greene mansion.

We found Ada and the cook alone in the drawing-room. The girl sat before the fire, a copy of Grimm's "Fairy-Tales" turned face down on her knees; and Mrs. Mannheim, busy with a lapful of mending, occupied a straight chair near the door. It was a curious sight, in view of the formal correctness of the house, and it brought forcibly to my mind how fear and adversity inevitably level all social standards.

When we entered the room Mrs. Mannheim rose and, gathering up her mending, started to go. But Vance indicated that she was to remain, and without a word she resumed her seat.

"We're here to annoy you again, Ada," said Vance, assuming the rôle of interrogator. "But you're about the only person we can come to for help." His smile put the girl at ease, and he continued gently: "We want to talk to you about what you told us the other afternoon. . . ."

Her eyes opened wide, and she waited in a kind of awed silence.

"You told us you thought you had seen your mother——"

"I did see her—I did!"

Vance shook his head. "No; it was not your mother. She was unable to walk, Ada. She was truly and helplessly paralyzed. It was impossible for her even to make the slightest movement with either leg."

"But—I don't understand." There was more than bewilderment in her voice: there was terror and alarm such as one might experience at the thought of supernatural malignancy. "I heard Doctor Von tell mother he was bringing a specialist to see her this morning. But she died last night—so how could you know? Oh, you must be mistaken. I saw her—I *know* I saw her."

She seemed to be battling desperately for the preservation of her sanity. But Vance again shook his head.

"Doctor Oppenheimer did not examine your mother," he said. "But Doctor Doremus did—to-day. And he found that she had been unable to move for many years."

"Oh!" The exclamation was only breathed. The girl seemed incapable of speech.

"And what we've come for," continued Vance, "is to ask you to recall that night, and see if you cannot remember something—some little thing—that will help us. You saw this person only by the flickering light of a match.

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You might easily have made a mistake."

"But how could I? I was so close to her."

"Before you woke up that night and felt hungry, had you been dreaming of your mother?"

She hesitated, and shuddered slightly.

"I don't know, but I've dreamed of mother constantly—awful, scary dreams—ever since that first night when somebody came into my room. . . ."

"That may account for the mistake you made." Vance paused a moment and then asked: "Do you distinctly remember seeing your mother's Oriental shawl on the person in the hall that night?"

"Oh, yes," she said, after a slight hesitation. "It was the first thing I noticed. Then I saw her face. . . ."

A trivial but startling thing happened at this moment. We had our back to Mrs. Mannheim and, for the time being, had forgotten her presence in the room. Suddenly what sounded like a dry sob broke from her, and the sewing-basket on her knees fell to the floor. Instinctively we turned. The woman was staring at us glassily.

"What difference does it make who she saw?" she asked in a dead, monotonous voice. "She maybe saw me."

"Nonsense, Gertrude," Ada said quickly. "It wasn't you."

Vance was watching the woman with a puzzled expression.

"Do you ever wear Mrs. Greene's shawl, Frau Mannheim?"

"Of course she doesn't," Ada cut in.

"And do you ever steal into the library and read after the household is asleep?" pursued Vance.

The woman picked up her sewing morosely, and again lapsed into sullen silence. Vance studied her a moment and then turned back to Ada.

"Do you know of any one who might have been wearing your mother's shawl that night?"

"I—don't know," the girl stammered, her lips trembling.

"Come; that won't do." Vance spoke with some asperity. "This isn't the time to shield any one. Who was in the habit of using the shawl?"

"No one was in the habit. . . ." She stopped and gave Vance a pleading look; but he was obdurate.

"Who, then, besides your mother ever wore it?"

"But I would have known if it had been Sibella I saw——"

"Sibella? She sometimes borrowed the shawl?"

Ada nodded reluctantly. "Once in a great while. She—she admired the shawl. . . . Oh, why do you make me tell you this!"

"And you have never seen any one else with it on?"

"No; no one ever wore it except mother and Sibella."

Vance attempted to banish her obvious distress with a whimsical reassuring smile.

"Just see how foolish all your fears have been," he said lightly. "You probably saw your sister in the hall that night, and, because you'd been having bad dreams about your mother, you thought it was she. As a result, you became frightened, and locked yourself up and worried. It was rather silly, what?"

A little later we took our leave.

"It has always been my contention," remarked Inspector Moran, as we rode down-town, "that any identification under strain or excitement is worthless.

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And here we have a glaring instance of it."

"I'd like a nice quiet little chat with Sibella," mumbled Heath, busy with his own thoughts.

"It wouldn't comfort you, Sergeant," Vance told him. "At the end of your *tête-à-tête* you'd know only what the young lady wanted you to know."

"Where do we stand now?" asked Markham, after a silence.

"Exactly where we stood before," answered Vance dejectedly, "—in the midst of an impenetrable fog.—And I'm not in the least convinced," he added, "that it was Sibella whom Ada saw in the hall."

Markham looked amazed.

"Then who, in Heaven's name, was it?"

Vance sighed gloomily. "Give me the answer to that one question, and I'll complete the saga."

That night Vance sat up until nearly two o'clock writing at his desk in the library.

XXIII

THE MISSING FACT

(Saturday, December 4; 1 p. m.)

Saturday was the District Attorney's "half-day" at the office, and Markham had invited Vance and me to lunch at the Bankers Club. But when we reached the Criminal Courts Building he was swamped with an accumulation of work, and we had a tray-service meal in his private conference room. Before leaving the house that noon Vance had put several sheets of closely written paper in his pocket, and I surmised—correctly, as it turned out—that they were what he had been working on the night before.

When lunch was over Vance lay back in his chair languidly and lit a cigarette.

"Markham old dear," he said, "I accepted your invitation to-day for the sole purpose of discussing art. I trust you are in a receptive mood."

Markham looked at him with frank annoyance.

"Damn it, Vance, I'm too confounded busy to be bothered with your irrelevancies. If you feel artistically inclined, take Van here to the Metropolitan Museum. But leave me alone."

Vance sighed, and wagged his head reproachfully.

"There speaks the voice of America! 'Run along and play with your æsthetic toys if such silly things amuse you; but let me attend to my serious affairs.' It's very sad. In the present instance, however, I refuse to run along; and most certainly I shall not browse about that mausoleum of Europe's rejected corpses, known as the Metropolitan Museum. I say, it's a wonder you didn't suggest that I make the rounds of our municipal statuary."

"I'd have suggested the Aquarium——"

"I know. Anything to get rid of me." Vance adopted an injured tone. "And yet, don't y' know, I'm going to sit right here and deliver an edifying lecture on æsthetic composition."

"Then don't talk too loud," said Markham, rising; "for I'll be in the next room working."

"But my lecture has to do with the Greene case. And really you shouldn't miss it."

Markham paused and turned.

"Merely one of your wordy prologues, eh?" He sat down again. "Well, if you have any helpful suggestions to make, I'll listen."

Vance smoked a moment.

"Y' know, Markham," he began, assuming a lazy, unemotional air, "there's a fundamental difference be-

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tween a good painting and a photograph. I'll admit many painters appear unaware of this fact; and when color photography is perfected—my word! what a horde of academicians will be thrown out of employment! But none the less there's a vast chasm between the two; and it's this technical distinction that's to be the burden of my lay. How, for instance, does Michelangelo's 'Moses' differ from a camera study of a patriarchal old man with whiskers and a stone tablet? Wherein lie the points of divergence between Rubens's 'Landscape with Château de Stein' and a tourist's snap-shot of a Rhine castle? Why is a Cézanne still-life an improvement on a photograph of a dish of apples? Why have the Renaissance paintings of Madonnas endured for hundreds of years whereas a mere photograph of a mother and child passes into artistic oblivion at the very click of the lens shutter? . . ."

He held up a silencing hand as Markham was about to speak.

"I'm not being futile. Bear with me a moment.—The difference between a good painting and a photograph is this: the one is arranged, composed, organized; the other is merely the haphazard impression of a scene, or a segment of realism, just as it exists in nature. In short, the one has form; the other is chaotic. When a true artist paints a picture, d' ye see, he arranges all the masses and lines to accord with his preconceived idea of composition—that is, he bends everything in the picture to a basic design; and he also eliminates any objects or details that go contr'ry to, or detract from, that design. Thus he achieves a homogeneity of form, so to speak. Every object in the picture is put there for a definite purpose, and is set in a certain position to accord with the underlying structural pattern. There are no irrelevancies, no unrelated details, no detached objects, no arbitr'ry arrangement of values. All the forms and lines are interdependent; every object—indeed, every brush stroke—takes its exact place in the pattern and fulfils a given function. The picture, in fine, is a unity."

"Very instructive," commented Markham, glancing ostentatiously at his watch. "And the Greene case?"

"Now, a photograph, on the other hand," pursued Vance, ignoring the interruption, "is devoid of design or even of arrangement in the æsthetic sense. To be sure, a photographer may pose and drape a figure—he may even saw off the limb of a tree that he intends to record on his negative; but it's quite impossible for him to compose the subject-matter of his picture to accord with a preconceived design, the way a painter does. In a photograph there are always details that have no meaning, variations of light and shade that are harmonically false, textures that create false notes, lines that are discords, masses that are out of place. The camera, d' ye see, is deucedly forthright—it records whatever is before it, irrespective of art values. The inevitable result is that a photograph lacks organization and unity; its composition is, at best, primitive and obvious. And it is full of irrelevant factors — of objects which have neither meaning nor purpose. There is no uniformity of conception in it. It is haphazard, heterogeneous, aimless, and amorphous—just as is nature."

"You needn't belabor the point." Markham spoke impatiently. "I have a rudimentary intelligence. — Where is this elaborate truism leading you?"

Vance gave him an engaging smile.

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"To East 53d Street. But before we reach our destination permit me another brief amplification.—Quite often a painting of intricate and subtle design does not at once reveal its composition to the spectator. In fact, only the designs of the simpler and more obvious paintings are immediately grasped. Generally the spectator has to study a painting carefully—trace its rhythms, compare its forms, weigh its details, and fit together all its salients—before its underlying design becomes apparent. Many well-organized and perfectly balanced paintings—such as Renoir's figure-pieces, Matisse's interiors, Cézanne's water-colors, Picasso's still-lives, and Leonardo's anatomical drawings—may at first appear meaningless from the standpoint of composition; their forms may seem to lack unity and cohesion; their masses and linear values may give the impression of having been arbitrarily put down. And it is only after the spectator has related all their integers and traced all their contrapuntal activities that they take on significance and reveal their creator's motivating conception. . . ."

"Yes, yes," interrupted Markham. "Paintings and photographs differ; the objects in a painting possess design; the objects in a photograph are without design; one must often study a painting in order to determine the design.—That, I believe, covers the ground you have been wandering over desultorily for the past fifteen minutes."

"I was merely trying to imitate the vast deluge of repetitive verbiage found in legal documents," explained Vance. "I hoped thereby to convey my meaning to your lawyer's mind."

"You succeeded with a vengeance," snapped Markham. "What follows?"

Vance became serious again.

"Markham, we've been looking at the various occurrences in the Greene case as though they were the unrelated objects of a photograph. We've inspected each fact as it came up; but we have failed to analyze sufficiently its connection with all the other known facts. We've regarded this whole affair as though it were a series, or collection, of isolated integers. And we've missed the significance of everything because we haven't yet determined the shape of the basic pattern of which each of these incidents is but a part.—Do you follow me?"

"My dear fellow!"

"Very well.—Now, it goes without saying that there is a design at the bottom of this whole amazin' business. Nothing has happened haphazardly. There has been premeditation behind each act—a subtly and carefully concocted composition, as it were. And everything has emanated from that central shape. Everything has been fashioned by a fundamental structural idea. Therefore, nothing important that has occurred since the first double shooting has been unrelated to the predetermined pattern of the crime. All the aspects and events of the case, taken together, form a unity—a co-ordinated, interactive whole. In short, the Greene case is a painting, not a photograph. And when we have studied it in that light—when we have determined the interrelationship of all the external factors, and have traced the visual forms to their generating lines—then, Markham, we will know the composition of the picture; we will see the design on which the perverted painter has erected his document'ry material. And once we have discovered the underlying shape of this hideous picture's pattern, we'll know its creator."

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Humoresque

BY JAMES BOYD

The author of those novels, "Drums" and "Marching On," which have well-nigh become classic tales of the Revolution and Civil War, writes for the first time of his own experiences in the Great War. It is one of a group of high moments of the war done by fighters who are also writers.

NOTHING but blackness and the void. No lights, no sounds, no firing. Nothing but the blackness through which the ambulances churned. They lurched and stuck and butted into each other. They kept close. They rocked, swung, and hung onto each other's tails like baby elephants lost in the African night. Did they still believe because you wore a trench coat and sat on the first car's seat, peering two inches into the black, that therefore you still knew the way?

The map was no good. The map! It made you laugh to think the way you'd studied it. It was a good map. You'd checked your orders on it. It was easy. On the map a straight, wide road had led right up to the town, eighteen and three-tenths kilometres from the main fork that you had passed the evening before, just as the last wet sullen twilight died and the last guns ceased firing. And on that road, as the map showed it, at pleasingly regular intervals, were three other smaller towns to guide you on your way. You had faithfully memorized that map; and, what is more, you and the company clerk had made tracings of it on toilet-paper and given one to every driver in case the fool got lost. Now there was nobody as lost as you. The road, so trustingly visualized as paved and poplar-flanked, had turned out to be a maze of wandering ruts among the shell-holes, and in this maze were sometimes brick heaps which might or might not have been your studiously noted towns. And the town where you were supposed to report for duty? It had been explained that the town was still in German hands at the start of the attack, but that nine hours after the zero hour it was to be taken by our troops. You had been impressed by such triumphant precision. But a day spent in the incredible chaos just behind the lines had turned you into a tired old cynic as regards all military competence. There was not a chance that the Americans had taken the town that afternoon, as scheduled. You and your faithful outfit had wrestled and fought your way through chaos, had shaken yourself loose from it, and now were dutifully trying to reach a town held by the enemy.

And not only they and you were lost. The battle itself was gone. You did not know where it was, or if there was one any more. Maybe it had rolled off northward. Or maybe it had died down where it started. Maybe you had run right through the lines that watched each other from their hiding-places in the dark. Your gullet turned to stone.

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But if you were through the lines, there ought to be some traffic, some troops, something in the Germans' rear. But if you were still behind your own lines, there ought to be the same. Anywhere there ought to be something beside this black.

"A house, maybe, lieutenant," the driver said. He was a Pennsylvania Dutchman. The day before he had been phlegmatically and unreasonably cheerful when the ambulances were locked in a traffic jam under a harassing fire. But since night had fallen he had not spoken.

"Well, then, stop." Your trench boots hit the mud. Behind, brakes squeaked, the line of ambulances stood still, the motors throbbed.

"Shut those motors off," you said. There was no sound then, in this night.

Across the road a gray shape turned out to be half a chimney. Bricks were scattered about. There might have been quite a few houses there. Maybe a village.

"No, this is not the place," you said. "Crank up."

"But wasn't it the place?" you thought, as soon as you had left it behind. Maybe our barrage the day before had flattened it. If it was the place, that's where you should have stayed. Anyhow, what was the place, what did it look like?

Why couldn't they give a man something to go by? There ought to be a way of telling a man what the place he was ordered to looked like. Then when he got to it he would know. This way a man had no chance. Especially with the road gone.They just sent him out with orders not to strike a light. He couldn't even look at his speedometer to see how far he'd travelled. And he couldn't look at the map. Just to make sure he remembered it. But it might as well have been a map of Asia. They just turned him loose in the dark. That was the staff, all right. But if there was a slip-up he got blamed for it. No excuse went. Blois for him.

It was all luck. The whole business. If you had stayed at that brick heap it might have been the right thing. Or again you might have been tried for failure to go on. No use to figure on that now. You probably wouldn't find the place if you turned back and tried. And now it would never do to turn back, even though the farther you went the bigger the chance of getting into trouble. However bad it would look to roll peacefully into the German lines, it was better than turning back.

The road defined itself, a sickly, phosphorescent blur. This must be the end of no man's land. But what man's land was it? This lost wandering had been going on too long. If only something would occur. Even a couple of iron-hooded Germans, standing guard.

The luminous streak tilted downhill. A humpbacked bridge made the car heave up. Houses were towering all around. This must be the place.

One door filtered a thread of light. You knocked. The echo came back from the houses. The door groaned open half a foot. A woman held a candle between her ancient, ratty face and yours—just for an instant—squeaked, "les Boches!" the door banged shut, a bolt tumbled home. In the silence two drivers whispered uneasily.

"J'a see that old dame?"

"J'a get the look she give him?"

The houses, cock-eyed and leaning perilously, were around a little cock-eyed square that ran up-hill to a tall black lump that must be the church.

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Beyond the lump lay a faint path of light. Somebody there. But who? Behind you the men were thinking the same. There was not a sound. Keeping close to the houses, you tried to glide noiselessly toward it. Your hobnails clicked and scraped on the uneven paving-stones.

Here was the light from an open door, and inside the door—inside that door—a great, big Marine held a great big flapjack in both hands. There was a field-kitchen, too, and a sergeant with a face carved deep in sandstone.

"Sergeant"—you tried to speak in the proper tone of holding this sergeant, this fine, big sergeant, to strict accountability for anything he might say—"what outfit's this?"

"Fifth Marines, sir."

You pretended that this answer was far from all it should be.

"Where's division headquarters?"

"Right here in town, sir."

Right here in town. Right here in town! Could you beat that? How about that for calling the turn? Well! Well! This sergeant was a knock-out, sure enough.

"You know of any place I can park my outfit?"

"What kind of outfit's the lieutenant got?"

"What difference does that make?"

"Ammunition goes down by the engineer dump, but nothing else."

"I've got ambulances," you said irritably. Ambulances would not impress this Marine.

"Down this street, sir, last house on the left, there's an open field." He spoke like a bright boy saying his catechism—his voice was toneless, rapid, precise, and self-admiring. Who did he think he was, anyway?

In the darkness the busses bumped and nudged each other into line along the open field. In a vaulted cellar across the street the men lit candles and threw down their packs. Everything was snug.

Everything was fine. Now you could catch a little sleep. But first you'd better look around to get the lay of the town.

In the street a figure stood in front of you.

"Monsieur, vous êtes de cette division?"

You couldn't think how to say "Only attached for duty," so you said: "Oui."

"Alors, suivez moi." His voice was crisp, he walked decisively. You followed, as a matter of course. He started down a passageway between two houses. Under cover of the passage he turned on his flash-light. He looked slim and girlish in his gray-blue belted uniform and high laced boots. The passageway was long. You had time to think. Who was this Frenchman? What was the big idea?

"Qu'est ce que vous voulez?"

He turned his pale face and gave you an inscrutable look from large, dark eyes. He stopped in front of a door and pulled a large iron key from his pocket. His flourish, his secrecy were childishly theatrical, but behind the gesture lay something precocious and disturbing. You thought inconsequentially of the impish, ancient small boys who solicited business for the women of Genoa. What was the idea? The passageway behind you was long and dark and narrow. This was a fine place to get bumped off if there was anything wrong about this Frenchman. A fine place to get bumped off, and no one would be the wiser. What was this Frenchman up to, anyway, or was he a Frenchman? The Germans had just been in

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the town, and were still only two kilometres away. There was talk of spies and booby-traps.

The door swung inward into total darkness.

"Apres-vous, monsieur," you said with immense decision, and took the Frenchman by the arm. Your right hand slid back to your automatic.

The Frenchman's feeble flash-light was lost in the cavern's dark except for two small, green, luminous globes, motionless and close together. Now what the——!

The Frenchman graciously inclined his head. "Une chèvre."

Your mind was stunned. What did that mean, "chèvre"? Chèvre? A goat? A goat. And what was more, you could smell it now.

"But, yes," you said, "a goat, that is true." Your tone was relieved, but noncommittal.

"Yes," said the Frenchman, "a very nice goat, and for you."

"For me?"

"Yes, for you, and with pleasure."

This dialogue was getting imbecile. The Frenchman was probably a little touched. Fellows got that way at the front. Funny how talking with a fellow like that made you feel a little touched, too. Your best play would be to pat him on the back and get out. The Frenchman's glance was patient but weary.

"One obtains milk from this goat," he explained; and as if that were not enough, he added: "For the cuisine."

Fresh milk. Milk for flapjacks. Milk for coffee. You were not very bright. The Frenchman knew it, too. How offset this unfortunate impression?

"How considerate you are, monsieur, but I would not deprive you."

"Myself," said the Frenchman, "I am on the point of departing." He spoke without the least regret. A goat or two was nothing as long as he was getting out of town. He might be right. Things might not be so good around here to-morrow.

He locked the door and handed you the key.

"Avec mes compliments." You remembered to pull out a package of Camels.

"Accept these, I pray you, monsieur."

"My greatest thanks, monsieur."

"And I thank you, monsieur, very greatly."

He flipped his little gloved hand against the visor of his cap. The light flashed off and he was gone.

In your dream, bricks were sliding down a roof at you. As they lit, you sat up in your bedding-roll. Around in the pale light the men sat up, staring, in their blankets. Down the street there was a sharp crack, and more bricks went tumbling. You took a look at the vaulting. It was the thinnest kind of brickwork. If anything landed on it, you would get the shell in the back of the neck, and all the bricks, too. Beside you, the top-kick stuck his face out of the blanket. It had the square-jawed, pig-headed look of a good top-kick. There were no more cracks among the house-tops. The men crawled out of their blankets and put on their shoes and leggings without talking. Some of them lit cigarettes. You gave the key to the sergeant.

"There's a goat in this shed. Send somebody over to milk her."

The men looked up. The sergeant got out his detail book.

"Zinsser, you're next."

Men spoke.

"Him! He can't milk."

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"Zinsser was raised on Second Avenue."

"Zinsser'll lose all our milk."

"Sure, I can milk," said Zinsser.

"Yeah, you can milk, Zinsser!"

"You just put a nickel in her ear and hold out your lily-cup."

"Is that a fact," the sergeant asked, "you was raised in New York, Zinsser?"

"I can milk," said Zinsser.

"Stewart, you'd better go," the sergeant said.

"Go on milk it, Stewart," said Zinsser; "I bet it's a ram."

The street of narrow, crowding houses lay deserted in the pale light. Your unwashed face felt stiff and greasy in the damp air. You opened your mouth and stretched your cheeks. You looked up at the roofs. Some chimneys and gables were gone. But it had been small stuff, 77s, most likely. Across the street, in an empty room, the men were waiting with their mess-kits. They held themselves like dejected, ruffled fowls in the raw air. The next house was the last house on the street. You walked around it to see how the ambulances looked by daylight. It would have been better if they were closer under the lee of the houses, but most likely you would be moving out in a few minutes, and the ground was firm and hard. There were other ambulances mixed up with yours. Their officer was looking at them. He had a face like a dead man's and an arm in a dirty sling.

"They gwine to shell this town," he said.

"Where you from?"

"Alabama."

"You look mighty bad."

"Oh, ah been like this a long time—a long time."

The field hospital was in the town hall, up the hill. The courtyard in front had a low stone wall around it. Behind it, leafless bushes and a rustic fence stood in a sodden garden that looked out over the roofs and the empty, sodden countryside.

A few wounded were in the cellar. You walked back down a stony path behind the back yards of the houses, and sent two ambulances up for them.

You went down into the cellar and sat on your bedding-roll and smoked. Some of the men were there. They asked you how far back the wounded had to be taken, and you said:

"To Toul."

They said nothing. Toul was a long way and the roads were terrible.

In the midst of your smoking, a swift rustling passed overhead and ended in a crack—bang! down the street. After that, a shell passed over every minute or two. It was hard to tell where they were going to land.

"You never hear the one that hits you. That's what I hear them say," remarked the little Jew without conviction.

The truck-driver from Roanoke considered this.

"Whut good would that be?" he demanded. "Whut good would it be to hyear the one that hits you?"

"My God!" exclaimed the little Jew impatiently, "it means if you hear it, it's going not to hit you. It's just a way of saying it," he added defensively.

The truck-driver was not satisfied.

"Whut good's that? Whut I want is to hyear the one that's going to hit me in time to move myse'f."

"Wheeler is right," said the Hopkins student, peering gravely through his spectacles. "All that should have been arranged."

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The truck-driver looked pleased with himself.

They were coming over in twos and threes now. The cracking and the rattle of bricks was all over town. A crunching explosion sounded near at hand. A man scuttled down the cellar stairs.

"Say, lieutenant, they just hit the ambulances."

"Anybody hurt?"

"They got two men in that other company."

No one was stirring in the park of ambulances. The ambulances were just as they had been, except that half-way down the line two twisted chassis tilted side by side, and a piece of bloody clothing and a shoe were stretched along the ground. They were not your ambulances; and if they had been, there was no use looking at them. You went back to the cellar. It was just as well. The firing was getting brisk again. Then there was quite a little flurry. A moment later feet scuttled overhead; the cook took off from the top step and landed spinning.

"I'm hit," he said, and pointed to his seat.

Men crowded around solicitously. The cook's meagre posterior showed only the reddening imprint of a brick. Uproar filled the cellar.

"Hit by a brick!"

"Hit in the blank, blank, blank!"

"Sew a wound-stripe on the seat of his pants!"

"All right," said the cook. His voice shook, his eyes blazed with Swedish wrath. "Let me hit one of you guys with a brick and see if you tell me what was it."

The men fell silent. It was not wise to affront a cook. The cook's tragic eyes met yours.

"Lieutenant, the kitchen's gone, and the goat's got out."

Instantly you and the cook were alone. Down from the street came whoops and the sound of running. You followed up the steps. The end of the street was filled with scuttling figures. Arms waved and clutched. Between the figures, now and then appeared a small, distracted goat. A shell smacked somewhere on beyond the square, and stirred her to nobler feats of dodging. You started to run and shout, but then they had her. She instantly collapsed. They came back, running fast, and dove into the alleyway. The supply sergeant's face, benign and anxious, peered out a window across the street.

"Tell the men if that goat gets out again," you shouted, "they're to let her go!"

"Yes, lieutenant," the supply sergeant answered. His voice was harried and placating. "I don't think she'll get out, sir. They've got her in a bedroom now."

The stony path up to the hospital seemed bleak and bare. The shells, which spattered among the houses down the hill, or thumped and grunted in the open fields near by, had no logical timing or direction. It was no use to run. You would as likely run into one. Just ahead, a stone garden-house heaved up in a shower of fragments and black smoke. When the smoke cleared, the garden-house was gone. You did not feel exactly scared, nor exactly sick. You felt as if you were getting your first whiffs of chloroform before an operation. Numb, yet supernaturally alert; apprehensive, yet resigned.

At the entrance to the hospital cellar the smell of men and of blood was cut through by the smell of chloroform.

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Funny that you should have thought of the chloroform first, and now be smelling it. But it was so; and suddenly you knew that everything that happened from now on would seem to be something that you had known or thought of just before.

The cellar was filled with smells and wounded men, and a sense of laborious, futile, hopeless bustle. At a table, under a lantern, a doctor in a butcher's apron was doing things to a red, wet hole that closed and opened slowly.

"Where's the evacuation officer?" you asked. "Are you him? How many have you got to go?"

The evacuation officer peered around the dim room.

"We've got about twenty walking cases."

"You'd better send them back in empty trucks. Then we can save the ambulances for the stretchers."

As you talked along and figured it out, the wounded against the wall looked up at you, and looked away again, like dogs who know they are being talked about, but do not know if what is being said means something good for them or bad.

After that, events merged into each other. Time stood still. You walked up or down the stony path to find out how many ambulances were left, how many wounded. When there was no firing, you felt pretty good, because you were always on the job and getting the wounded out in good shape. When the firing was heavy, you thought it was a funny thing that the Signal Corps could not have run a wire between the park and the hospital. It would have saved a lot of dangerous walking. You thought of a few good things to say to the division signal officer, even if he was a colonel. Then the chief signal officer would say coldly: "Well, lieutenant, did you make a requisition?" And that would be the end of that.

At night the firing slacked off. With the road as it was, it would be better not to move any more wounded till dawn. Planes could not spot the ambulances in the early light. Anyhow, maybe they would not start shelling again.

In the vaulted cellar the first drivers were coming back. They had done sixteen hours at the wheel. Now they could sleep for six. Most of them wanted to smoke and talk, though.

Leaning on an elbow the Boston Irishman fixed you with deep-sunk blue eyes.

"You can't make time, lieutenant. Coming back through no man's land Casey had to walk ahead and feel for shell-holes with his feet."

"And when you're back there they won't take your load. They always send you to another hospital." A Californian spoke with weary resignation. "I went to four. And one bird passed out."

"Was that damn dentist there at Toul when you made it?"

"In the receiving-ward? Yeah. He says: 'Get the hell out of here.' And all the time this bird that passed out was sayin'—" The Californian stopped and stared down at his hands.

"The dirty little squirt. He did the same to me. But I stuck around, and when he was inside I says to the orderly, 'Say, Jack, want a souvenir?' and I flashed a Gott Mit Uns belt. 'You jerk my load out,' I says. And he did."

"Believe me, I don't want to do that stretch to Toul with a hole in my belly."

"You can't help shakin' 'em up."

"My springs are gone, anyhow."

"One bird starts cussin' me. Then

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he calls me a son of a bitch. I climb right out. 'Look here,' I says, 'I'm drivin' the best I can. Another squawk out of you and I'll——' "

"They sure get sick, though."

"You said it. The best thing is to salvage a tin hat for 'em to puke in."

Next morning, before the first cold light, the ambulances rolled. Up in the hospital cellar everything was the same. The same doctors cut away and threw junk into a bloody pail. The same wounded seemed to crouch against the wall or lie stiff and staring. It was as though in all these hours we had not gotten anywhere.

After a while a shell hit somewhere in town. Everybody listened and hoped there would be no more. Then another landed. After that it was about the same as the day before.

The drivers when they came up to the courtyard looked bad. Their eyes were red and sunk and their mouths were tight. Some of them had just gotten in at dawn.

If only the wounded would stop coming in, and give you a chance to get ahead of the game.

"Did the cook have chow for you when you got in?" you asked.

"Yeah, he had it."

In the late afternoon you sat in the cellar of the hospital. It was packed. In there you could not hear the shells exploding, but they must be falling pretty fast. From the ground came thumping sounds about like a lazy nigger tamping a hole.

All the rest of the ambulances were due to come up now, so that they could make the run back through no man's land before night fell.

The hard thing was to keep your eyes off the figure in the corner. You had seen it just by accident. A little luck and you might have missed it. In looking around, your eye had lit on a pair of square-toed German boots sticking out between the handles of a stretcher. You had followed the long, thin bundle up its length. At the other end—at the other end was a red, wet bundle of bandages a little bigger than a man's head—red and wet. Now you did not look at it at all. But you knew that every so often, at terrible intervals, on top of that red, wet lump a little bubble formed, swelled, burst with a snap. Between times there was nothing but the patch of yellow foam.

A klaxon sounded overhead. "Four stretcher cases," you said, and climbed the steps.

Beyond the courtyard, casual shells were falling.

"You can go inside there, under cover, Parsons," you said, "but it's no good, though."

The driver hunched down in his seat. "I'm all right, lieutenant, if they'll load 'er up."

"Come on with those stretchers," you shouted.

Two orderlies toiled out with the first load. It was a big heavy bundle that made the stretcher-poles sag.

"Don't you know enough to take light ones for up top?" You helped them raise it high and slipped the stretcher-handles into the upper slings. They ran the stretcher back into the bus. Another bundle on a stretcher came into the yard. Two more were waiting in the doorway.

The shells were dropping closer. The last stretcher was being loaded. You had one side and a swarthy hospital orderly the other. Another orderly held the feet. A cracking, metallic bang on top of you—the gate-post of the courtyard spouted and burst into smoke. The

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orderly let go his side; with a jar, the handle landed on the tail-gate. "You son of a bitch!" You made a pass at him. The orderly ducked and disappeared. The wounded man made no sound; he did not even open his eyes; the color flowed from his cheeks. You shoved the stretcher in.

"Step on her going over the bridge," you said to Parsons.

"I'm going to. They've bumped off two M. P.s down there a'ready."

The shell-fire still was hovering around the courtyard. Another ambulance was coming in. As it stopped, the brick-dust jolted off its roof.

Where were the orderlies with the stretchers? You had seen them waiting in the hallway a moment before—just before that last shell. Where had those lousy orderlies gone? Another shell sent cobblestones spinning slowly. Those lousy orderlies. You turned to run down to the cellar. In front of you stood four dejected wooden figures in dirty German uniforms stripped clean of buttons.

"Load those stretchers." You pointed. As you spoke, the tallest figure clicked his heels, pulled back his shoulders, stared into space. "Into this ambulance. See?" You pointed again.

Carefully they brought a stretcher. You showed them how to fit the sling. Carefully they slid it into the ambulance, and went for another with lumbering speed. It was wonderful the way the shells kept far enough away.

From then on the ambulances came in quick succession. The shells wove patterns around them but never landed. The four bedraggled prisoners, like docile, faithful dogs, were solemnly alert and anxious to please. They were watchful and ready. They loaded the ambulances with care and with a swift clumsy dexterity. Between times you made them go inside and gave them cigarettes, at which they threw out their right legs and thumped their heels together.

At dusk the firing stopped. The last ambulance rocked away.

"That'll be all, I guess," the evacuation officer said; "we're pretty well cleaned out here now. And say," he added, as though it were an afterthought, "we're relieved to-night. We're moving back to-morrow."

You were suddenly hungry and tired and cold and filthy. You would go down and see if that brick-battered cook had anything to eat.

J. B.

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"Tea" in an Old House

BY VIOLET ALLEYN STOREY

Now "tea" in an old house
  Means much more than tea
And nut-bread and cookies
  Cut whimsically.

Who enters an old house
  Opens a white door,
A fan-light above it
  And hollyhocks before.

Who walks through an old house
  Walks on braided mats
Past sea-chests, and samplers,
  And porcelain dogs and cats.

Who sits in an old house
  Fills a Windsor chair,
Or shares a broad settle
  While driftwood crackles there.

Who sups in an old house
  Handles Flowing Blue,
And Lowestoft, and Willow,
  And Sandwich glasses, too.

Who looks in an old house
  Sees high-boys and low,
And tilt-tops reflecting
  Dipped bayberries' glow.

Who chats in an old house
  Chats of purple cows
Grazing on a jug, or
  Of prints where ghosts carouse.

For "tea" in an old house
  Means each one of these
Friendly, everyday things,
  Quaint with memories!

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Three Wagons

BY RICHARD B. FOWLER
Author of "Practicality in Practice"

ILLUSTRATION BY STAFFORD GOOD

CHARLEY FRICK sat on a box in the obscuring shadow of a warehouse. Before him was the railroad yard with its night sounds and its steel rails catching the reflections of signal-lights at intervals. Across half a dozen tracks stood a huge freight-engine, steaming and dripping. The open fire-box lit the cab with its glow, revealing indistinctly the head and shoulders of the fireman. Behind the engine was half a mile of freight-cars, the long line only dimly visible in the semidarkness except at each street crossing where two or three cars came within the radius of an electric light.

Back where the red lantern on the side of the caboose marked the end of the train, the yards were wider, with more tracks. On some of the tracks were standing switch-engines and side-tracked box cars. A lantern moved with a swaying motion close to the ground, coming from the caboose to the engine.

In the other direction, about four blocks away, was the passenger-station, brilliantly lighted. Taxis waited around it. A train was due. In the air hung an invigorating odor of smoke and steam.

This was the living world to Charley. To-night he felt more keenly than usual its undertone of excitement, its perpetual newness, and its warm friendliness. Men moved back and forth out there in the yards, now in plain view and now like shadows. All of Charley's nerves and instincts had been crying to return to this during the past six weeks that he and Buck had spent following the harvest up from Oklahoma. He could scarcely realize that he was home again. The sense of freedom and the world beyond were the things that made his home whether he was in Woodbine, Iowa, or Atlanta, Georgia. To-night they were going to Canfield. To-morrow they would deposit their wages in the bank there as they had done after every harvest for the past eight years. It didn't take any money for them to live while they were healthy and able to do a day's work occasionally. But some day they might need money. Charley had convinced Buck of that.

Yes, to-morrow they would be in Canfield! Charley rose from the box and walked back and forth a few times in the shadows. He had been born in Canfield and had lived there until he was sixteen years old. That explained his choice of a bank for depositing his money every year. Mr. Winter, who had continued to be a friend of Pop's even after he got to be a big business man, was in that bank. He would tell people that Charley wasn't any regular bum. Bums didn't work in the harvest every year and save up until they had a thousand dollars. Pop would know and Mom. But Mom didn't care now. She had been dead for six months.

Charley wished he had gone to see

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his mother, at least once. Of course it would have been a big risk for him to have taken. She might have convinced him that he ought to stay home. She lived for her belief in what she called "a body's duty," in an honest day's work and in her idea of respectability. It had been a kind of religion with her, a faith that she didn't want to reason out. Pop was the same way. It was sickening, the seriousness with which he would hitch up his team to the wagon at six-thirty in the morning, always at six-thirty. All day he would haul boxes and trunks, getting his loads from the two freight-houses and the passenger-stations. He had been to those places every day for years. There were certain joking remarks that he always made to the baggage-hustlers and flunkies around the freight-yards. At night he would come home to tell just what he had said and what somebody else had said. He would figure up how much freight there had been and say that he wasn't charging enough. After supper he would sit out on the porch in his cane-bottom chair, smoking his pipe, until, with his usual yawn, he would stretch his tired little body and go to bed. Day after day his life was going, just like that. He used to brag that for five years he had not been ten miles from the Union Pacific depot. And Pop did it deliberately. He had seen Grandpa do the same way, at exactly the same work, and eventually die. Charley had helped his father back Grandpa's old wagon under the shed roof out in the back yard, where it stood with the tongue reaching out into the yard in everybody's way.

"I reckon we'll just let it stay there," Pop had said. "It don't seem right to do away with it when it went right along with the old man for twenty-odd year. We'll keep it the same as we keep his old Bible and rockin'-chair."

Yes, Charley believed that there was more of Grandpa in the wagon and Bible and old rocking-chair than there was in the body that they had buried. And the most of him was in the wagon. Pop had solemnly put a board under the end of the tongue. After looking at it for a minute, he had crawled to the seat of his own wagon and driven away to get a load of trunks.

Charley had once been afraid that he, too, might drift into such slavery. But now, thank God, he was free! At the very heart of his life was freedom. There were those rails leading off into the darkness, east and west, north and south. In box cars or on top of them, on the blinds or the tender of a fast passenger, he and Buck could be carried anywhere in the continent. Usually they didn't even make sure of the destination of a train. To the east were the cities, all alive and all different; good shows for twenty cents, unconverted saloons where a bunch of grimy men, who had never seen each other before, could sit around in a haze of smoke, eating hamburgers, drinking beer, inhaling the odor of frying grease, and talking about real places and real men. In those cities were crowds of breathing, living people from everywhere.

To the west was the cattle country, where a railroad-station was a little shed set down in the open plain with two or three naked store buildings, a few bare houses, and a half-dozen windmills around it; not a sign of a tree anywhere. He and Buck could loaf there and breathe deep for a day or two. Beyond that were the mountains, where they could walk a few yards from the right of way and look straight down a thousand feet. They could lie flat on the top

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of a box car, going forty miles an hour, and look at snow a mile in the air. Then, on the other side of the mountains was California, the place to go in the winter-time.

Buck ought to be coming pretty soon. He had gone to find out what train went to Canfield.

Those freight-cars all gathered together out there. In a few days that train would be split up. Steel rails would carry the cars in forty different directions. Two months from now some of them might be in the teeming freight-yards at Brooklyn; one, perhaps, would be standing on a siding at Miami; another could be rolling along through the mountains toward Mexico City; while still another was taking on a load at Seattle. He and Buck might be near or on any one of them. Charley had tried to tell Buck about that; but, of course, Buck didn't understand such things.

The activity of men in the yards indicated that something would be moving right away. Charley sat down and watched with interest.

Buck emerged out of the shadow of a sidetracked Pullman car a few yards away. A shiver rattled through the freight-train.

"Do we take that one, Buck?" Charley asked in a quick, low voice as soon as Buck had come close.

Buck stopped beside him casually. His teeth showed in the semidarkness. "No, this outfit goes the wrong way; Minneapolis. But there's a passenger comin', see? It goes straight through for Canfield. Nice for us; ain't it?"

"Any dicks out there, Buck?"

"Yeah, the yard's full of 'em."

This was indeed a happy return to the road; a through passenger to ride on, and railroad detectives on the job to give it additional interest.

The huge freight-engine, with loud coughs, got its heavy load under way. The cars moved by at a rolling, rhythmic speed. On top of one of them a brakie signalled with a lantern. In a few minutes the rear lights of the caboose blinked at them from far down the track. It was on its way to Minneapolis.

The passenger-train came from the other direction. First a whistle shrieked in the distance, sending Charley eagerly to his feet. The headlight came in view; a growing roar vibrated through the air; then, coming nearer, it died down suddenly, giving way to a ringing bell and sporadic coughs; the track was flooded with light. And the passenger-locomotive drew its line of dimly lighted cars past Charley and Buck to its stopping-place in front of the station. It was very beautiful to Charley, that black, raging animal of an engine that could hound its way across the country at fifty miles an hour. As he and Buck walked to the place where they would catch the train on its way out, Charley wanted to run or whistle or shout or do any of the things that would give expression to his rising spirits and incidentally get them run out of the yards.

It was only a few minutes later that they stood in the blind of the first baggage-car, sensing the gathering speed that was carrying them out once more into the world of real life after six weeks away from it. A business street with its rows of lights and electric signs, the crossing-bell ringing, and halted automobiles flashed before them. Then they passed the semibusiness streets. And the town fell away until it was nothing but a blinking constellation of lights far in the rear. They were in the open country.

Charley and Buck crawled to the top

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of the tender and sat down comfortably. Above them rolled a cloud of smoke. The shriek of the whistle, only a few feet from them, burst against their ears as they approached crossings. The flat land around them was the wheat country, peaceful and alluring by the light of the three-quarters moon that had just risen to the east. Charley liked to watch dreamily the fields dotted indistinctly with wheat shocks. He lay back against the partition that separated the water-tank from the coal and drew refreshingly from a cigarette. It looked like a different world now that he was leaving it. He could easily forget these fields as they had been every day for the past six weeks; miles of wheat shocks and yellow stubble reaching out to a flat sky-line, the focussed hot rays of the close-hanging sun, the rattling binders always dropping more rows of bundles to be stood into rows of shocks, always an insufferable sameness; sweat and tired muscles. But he was getting away from all that, now. The roar of the train was lulling music; the wind beat by him at fifty miles an hour; overhead were the stars, and to the east was the moon. Charley felt very near to everything out here. He looked at Buck sitting solemnly beside him, his old black hat pulled half over his eyes, and three inches of bare shin, between pants' leg and shoe-top, glistening in the moonlight.

Charley spoke to him in a voice that was no louder than necessary to make himself heard. "A week from now we may be in New York at Jack Annin's joint, Buck."

"Yeah, might be." Buck stretched out his leg in physical comfort.

"Or we might be in Quebec."

"Depends on the trains we get."

"Or New Orleans."

"It don't make a damn bit of difference to me."

Of course Buck didn't understand these things.

Canfield. Charley and Buck stood uncertainly before the substantial Roman front of Mr. Winter's bank. That morning they had spent loafing around town, for the greater part of the time at the Union Pacific depot, where Charley had thought he might get a glimpse of Pop, his slim five feet six struggling under the sagging weight of a trunk. He had seen Joe Sweeny, who had always been Pop's especial rival, driving off with a load of baggage.

Charley looked at the brass-bound door before him. As a last-minute idea, he turned down and buttoned the collar of his khaki shirt; he rather wished he had bought a tie. He tightened the belt that held up the loose folds of his pants and straightened his cap on his head like a real gent would wear it. Mr. Winter, if he happened to be around, could not say that Charley had looked like a bum.

"Let's get the dough stored and move on out of this burg," Buck said impatiently as he led the way into the bank. They ignored their impressive, marble surroundings and walked directly to one of the cages.

"One hundred and thirty-six cool smackers, Buddy," Buck explained suavely to the studious-looking young man before him. "Put that in with what's already here and mark me down for one grand; mebbe more. Not so bad for a travelling man; is it, fellah?"

When Buck had finished, Charley took his place before the cage.

"Mr. Winter wants to see you. Wait a minute, please," the young man said and was gone.

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Mr. Winter wanted to see him? Charley was puzzled. He hadn't come in contact with the banker since the time, three years before, when he had talked to him about settling down and getting a job. If there was any more of that stuff, he'd just beat it on out of here.

Mr. Winter appeared from an office door. Charley wanted to get away; the banker was so neat, clean, and thoughtful-looking.

"How do you do, Charley?" The man's greeting was solemn. He shook hands mechanically.

"Hello." Charley shifted his weight from the right foot to the left and looked at a marble pillar.

"I have bad news for you, my boy. Your father is dead."

"What?"

"Yes, he died two weeks ago. We tried to locate you, but were not able to do it. I thought you would be in here sooner or later. As the administrator, I have taken charge of the estate."

"Pop's dead?" Charley tried to comprehend it. His mother's death had made him feel sad, probably more so and for a longer time than this would. But Pop! He had never thought of Pop dying.

"Two weeks ago yesterday it was. They called me out there before he died."

Charley experienced a queer, uncertain feeling. It seemed that Pop's death had upset things; he didn't know exactly what, just things in general. He had always felt that the old man would keep right on doing what he called his duty, shifting baggage and being respectable, for years yet.

"Yes, the doctor said it was from an internal injury that resulted when he fell with a box of freight. It's sad, very sad. Since you are his only child, all our sympathy goes out to you."

"Yeah." Charley looked at the wrinkled toe of his long, pointed shoe. He ought to say something. The responsibility for saying the right thing seemed instantly to have settled on him because he was the only child. He wished he was sitting on top of a box car going forty miles an hour. Mr. Winter was still talking. It was his place to listen.

"Now if your friend will meet you later, we'll talk over our business on the way out to your house. My car is just outside."

Business! Yes he knew that a person's dying meant a settling up of some kind.

"I'll wait down by the U. P. Station," Buck said as he shambled toward the door. Buck was a good guy.

Charley felt funny riding in an automobile.

"Yes, I think there are only minor debts. I have statements for those. I think when everything is settled that, in addition to the house and personal effects, I will be able to turn over to you about fifteen hundred in cash," Mr. Winter was continuing his statement on the estate.

The last words caught Charley's attention. "Of Pop's money?" he said uncertainly.

"Yes, naturally."

"But that's the saving-account Pop thought so much of."

Mr. Winter nodded and half smiled. "Yes, he's been adding to it ever since he finished paying for the house twelve years ago."

"And I'm to take it?"

"Of course. You are his heir, you know. We'll fix out the papers when everything is settled."

That money seemed too important to Charley to be handed around so lightly.

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It was coming to him just simply by signing his name. He had already worked and saved up the thousand dollars that would take care of him if he ever got sick or in trouble. This other money had too much of Pop tied up in it. It was too big a thing. And yet something would have to be done with it.

The car bumped along a street that had been familiar to Charley when he had lived near it. He had forgotten how drab it was; not that he minded its being ugly. But those houses! That one, white in some remote past, with the gables and the sagging porch; and that painted red brick, two-story thing, a flat, cold surface to the street with four naked windows and an unporched door glaring from it; they were dead. They could shelter only shrivelled lives. There was the building where he had gone to school.

He wondered if he and Buck could make it in to Kansas City to-night. It was only a two-hour run on a through passenger.

They turned into a street that jerked the car more than did the one they were leaving. It was startlingly familiar. The buildings on it had changed only to deteriorate. The car stopped. They were in front of a gray house set well back in a bare yard. One maple-tree stood in front of it. Charley stared silently. Pop never had been able to get grass to grow in the yard. Funny how little that house looked to have so much room in it. A person might think it had only one story if it wasn't for the dormer extending out of an otherwise straight, shed roof. It looked empty, as if no one had lived in it for years. It was as dead as those houses on the other street.

"Well, how does your house look to you?" Mr. Winter asked in an effort to be pleasant.

"All right." His house? Charley hadn't thought of that. What could he do with a house? Sell it? He remembered hearing Pop say that it had taken eighteen years for him to finish paying for the place.

"Now we'll just step in and look around," Mr. Winter said affably as he got out of the car.

Charley followed him along the walk. Pop's dying had certainly confused things.

Charley felt queer and unnatural when he stood aside to let Mr. Winter unlock the door. He thought probably it was his business to take the lead in looking at the old house instead of leaving it to an outsider. They entered the sitting-room. It was the same old place, a little shrunken in size, perhaps. It had never occurred to him that Pop and Mom would ever leave it.

"I have had the things here listed. They are of no great value, I think," Mr. Winter explained in a businesslike voice.

"No, not much, I guess."

There was the wicker chair that Mom used to like when she sat down to sew. The bottom sagged. Shoved back against the wall was Grandpa's old rocker, the high back padded with faded cloth. In the middle of the room stood the claw-footed library-table. Grandpa's Bible was on it. The big, roll-top desk in the corner had been Pop's pride. He used to sit in front of it sorting over his hauling bills, smoking a cigar for the occasion. It made him feel like a business man. On the wall was Pop and Mom's wedding-picture. Mom always said it made her feel old to look at it.

"I guess there's no need of going over the whole house, now," said Mr. Winter after a brief survey. "You know

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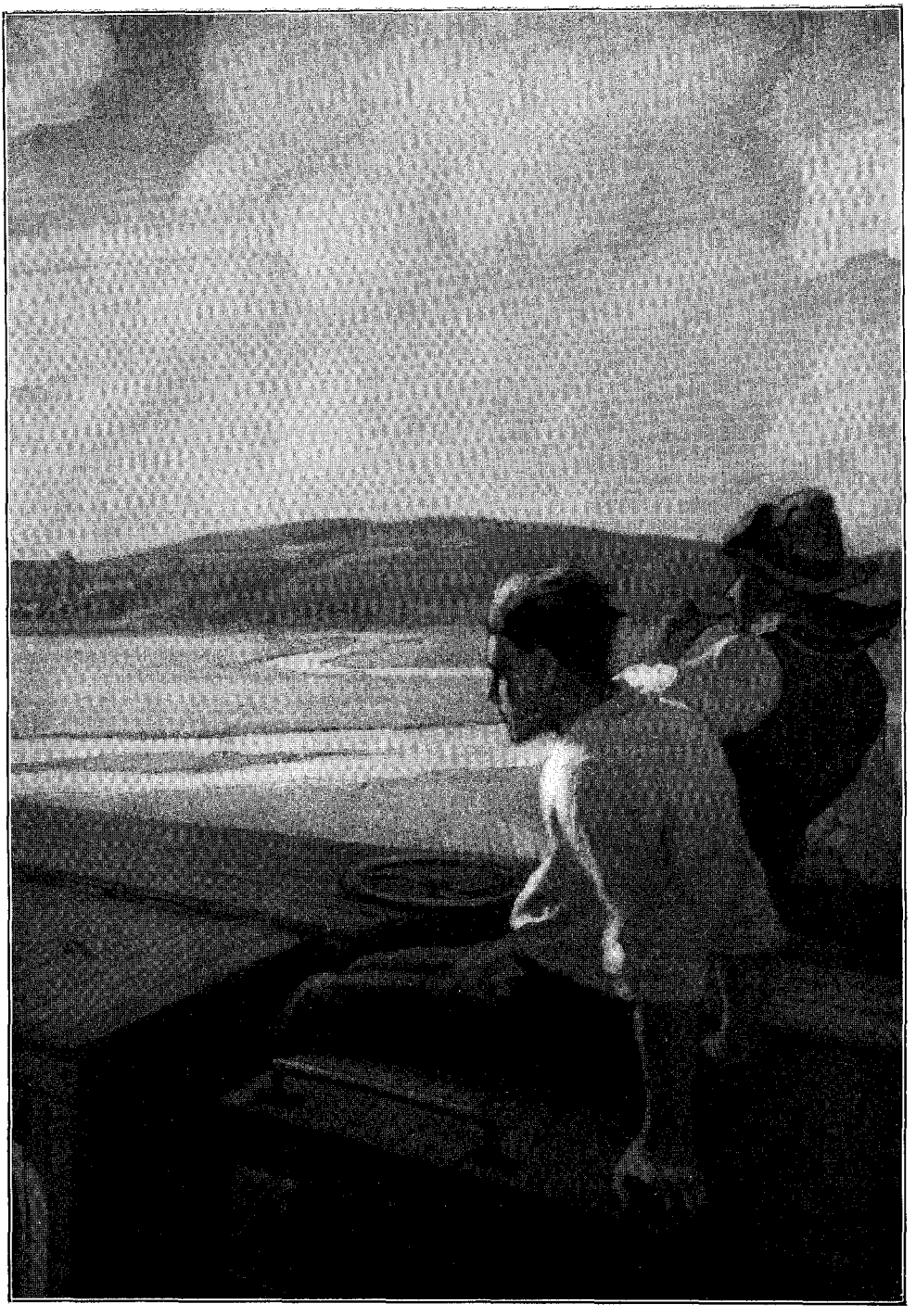

He and Buck could be carried anywhere in the continent.

From a painting by Stafford Good.

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in general what's here. And you can see what shape things have been left in. The point is now, what are you going to do with all this stuff?"

Charley was silent.

"Of course you might leave some things with the house and sell it furnished. But there isn't much that anybody would want. Those old chairs, for instance, are not good for anything but kindling. That desk you might get five dollars for from a second-hand store. The pictures and books, of course, are worthless."

"That was Grandpa's Bible," Charley said in a low voice.

"Yes. It's too bad it's so bulky or you might take it along with you."

"That picture there is of Pop and Mom when they were married," Charley continued.

"Yes, yes. Your father always kept things like that. He had his own ideas about what was important. The home ranked next to the job with him, I guess. He thought it was his duty to keep things going. We'll just step out into the back yard now and see how things are out there." Mr. Winter started to lead the way. Charley opened the door for him.

The back yard was the same as it had always been, littered with corn-stalks and sacks. An old hickory feed-basket lay upside down on the ground. Pop had always liked to pause with a basket of corn on his arm to tell how he had joked with somebody that day or how much freight he had hauled.

Charley stopped when he looked toward the old, open-front shed. There was Grandpa's weather-beaten old wagon still standing where they had left it that day when Pop had said: "It don't look right to do away with it when it went along with the old man for twenty-odd year." There it stood with the tongue reaching out into the yard. And the other old wagon next to it, left in the same useless way, must have been Pop's. It was evidently worn out too. Yes, there was no doubt about its being Pop's. It had been in good condition when Charley had last seen it; but he remembered that odd wheel that they had put on to replace one that was broken. That brake was familiar, too. It had been Pop's own invention. For a moment Charley felt that Pop ought to come out of the stable to hitch up and drive away. The two wagons there, side by side—Grandpa and then Pop—just the same.

But the shed had been lengthened to make room for another wagon that stood beside Pop's and Grandpa's; a new one! Whose was that?

Charley could not analyze or explain it, but he felt that he was facing an unavoidable combination of circumstances. He wondered if he was helpless. He paid no attention to Mr. Winter, who continued to talk.

"Yes, your father bought that new wagon only the month before he died. Didn't get to use it much. You might get a pretty good price for that. The others are just junk. Your horses are over at a neighbor's. Well, we might as well drive back to the bank." Mr. Winter turned to go.

Charley looked again at the three wagons, their tongues side by side reaching out into the yard. Grandfather, father, and— He followed Mr. Winter.

"Well, what shall we do with all that stuff?" Mr. Winter asked when they were again riding in the car.

"I'll let you know to-morrow." Charley answered very quietly. He remembered that he had planned to get

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into Kansas City to-night. He might do it. Why not?

Evening came. Charley and Buck sat together in the open door of a sidetracked box car. Signal-lights burned red and green. There were the tracks leading off east to the live and mysterious cities, and west to the plains and the mountains. They connected with other tracks leading everywhere. A little way from where they sat was a passenger-engine, its headlight unimpressive in the gray evening. Behind it was a row of lighted cars and a dispersing crowd on the platform of the Union Pacific Station.

"She'll be comin' any minute now," said Buck.

"Yes." Charley looked straight ahead.

"She ought to get into Kansas City in two hours. Mebbe we could mount a hot-shot out o' there yet to-night. Be in St. Louis to-morrow. We might see some boys in that joint on Market Street."

"And maybe next week we'd be in Jack Annin's place havin' a hell of a good time." Charley spoke the words slowly. He wondered what would happen to everything if he just left to-night and never said anything more to Mr. Winter—that money Pop had worked twelve years to save, that house and the things in it. He didn't know. They were his responsibility now. And yet why should he have to take things that he didn't want, even if they were all that was left to show for Grandpa and Mom and Pop's ever having lived? He could forget all that. But there were the wagons out in the shed, grandfather's, father's, and—son's. All afternoon he had been able to reason only to that point. The breath of life hung over the railroad-tracks to-night.

Five minutes they sat there like that. Buck's eyes were turned to the ground. Three inches of his shins glistened from the reflection of a near-by light. He looked up, speaking with a nervous effort. "We might take a notion to make it down into Old Mexico from Kansas City. It makes a feller feel funny and different bein' down there."

Charley straightened his cap on his head.

The engine gave a short toot, then a cough. Its headlight was a little more far-reaching now that darkness had deepened slightly.

"We'll have to get ready to mount her," Buck said anxiously. "First blind all right?"

Charley looked at him. Buck was a good guy, the best there was.

The engine was approaching slowly.

"Are you goin'?" Buck persisted.

Charley was silent. Buck jumped to the ground and Charley followed. The engine was not thirty yards from them.

"We'll have to get ready," Buck tried to impress him.

"No, old fellow, I'm not going." The words came with difficulty.

"But—but—" The light of the cab was almost above them. "But—hell!" Buck strove for words.

"It's my duty, Buck, that's all."

The engine had passed. Their hands clasped and Buck stepped across two intervening tracks and swung himself into the darkness of the second blind.

Charley watched the train until it disappeared, a row of lights, around a bend in the yards. There were switch-engines, sidetracked box cars, and more steel rails up that way. Over it all hung an elusive odor of smoke. The departing train whistled in the distance.

Charley walked back past the passenger-station, now almost deserted. He

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saw a stooped man climb to the seat of a big dray-wagon and heard him cluck to his horses as he drove away. It was Joe Sweeny, Pop's especial rival. The man seemed as if he were an upright projection, a part of the wagon, and nothing more, as he disappeared in the dim light. And Charley turned his steps in the direction of the gray house and the shed where three wagons stood in a row, their tongues reaching out into the yard.

The Church and Social Uplifters

BY U. R. BELL
Author of "The Beneficent Barrier of Sects"

THE promoters of new things are often looked upon as freaks and radicals. That is especially true in the realm of ideas. It is true that their enthusiasm sometimes submerges their good judgment. Yet, after all, society is greatly indebted to them. It profits by the mistakes and the errors of those who have ventured into realms unexperienced. A few years ago it was discovered that Jesus talked about the kingdom of God more than anything else. It was also discovered that the kingdom of God was a social order, a society of human beings. This discovery was heralded abroad as the social gospel. Its promoters, however unwise they may have been in the application of this new discovery, started something that is here to stay. As we look back over the years, the application of the social gospel has gone through similar stages that society has experienced in the application of the locomotive, the automobile, and the airplane. By experience we learn how to use new things in a practical way and also to perfect the thing itself. We begin with a mere idea, a suggestion which must be perfected as well as its application. The social gospel is still in the experimental stage.

The pastor of long experience has developed a different point of view on the question of the social gospel and its application from that of the average reform secretary or professor. In the end the man who is closest to the people to whom the application of the social gospel is to be made is the man who is going to have the last effective word concerning it.

Every pastor knows that the masses who compose local congregations throughout the country are very conservative and are slow to take on anything new in religion. If he has preached the social gospel, which many more of them have done than have been given credit for it, it was done necessarily in shrouded language. When he became specific he intimated that he was referring to a situation in the West if he preached in the East, or in the North if he preached in the South. He could be as specific as he wished to be

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about so-called personal sins. He could talk about the dancers, the card-players, and theatre-goers in their very presence and get away with it. The people were used to that and more or less expected it. But when he attacked some local business, some local institution, or some local social sore he was obliged to speak of it indirectly, as if he were speaking of some existing situation in some far-away place. Otherwise he was reminded that business is business and that he was hired to save souls. The average pastor has not been the coward, however, on social questions that he has been represented to be. His place of leadership is not adapted to traits of radicalism. However progressive or radical he may be at heart, he knows what his hold upon his people as a pastor involves better than the secretary and the professor.

Consequently the open and aboveboard enthusiastic social-gospel advocates have been found in larger numbers proportionately among professors, secretaries, and independent religious leaders who have served organizations and institutions subsidiary and unattached to the local church. The Y. M. C. A., for instance, has been a haven for many enthusiastic social-gospel advocates. Reform movements, organizations, and institutions of all kinds have thrived as never before with a leadership for whom the church provided no place in her local programme. These subsidiary movements, however, that are of a reform nature have depended upon the church at large for life and support. Pulpits all over the land, regardless of denominational tenets, have been thrown open to them, where dramatic appeals were made for funds to carry on. Addresses eulogizing some movement that was going to be the means of saving mankind from the one sore that was the root of all our ills were directed to the listener's pocketbook. The visits of professional reformers who never forgot to take up a collection could be expected many times during the course of a church year.

They could say things that many a pastor dared not to say. But the significant thing was not that they could speak as they did, but that they could do things that they did. They could do things that no pastor could do, and in many instances things that no pastor would do. The reformer was obliged to get results or else lose the sanction and the support of the church at large upon which he depended. The fact that he was unattached to a local congregation and unhandicapped by local or denominational oversight enabled him to use methods by which he succeeded that would have been the undoing of most pastors in the average American pulpit.

What has happened? A change in attitude has taken place. For example, take the Anti-Saloon League. It is the most powerful organization of its kind, and the ideal of many of them. If reports are true, and there seems to be no reason to doubt them wholly, even though exaggeration must be admitted, the powers that be in the Anti-Saloon League have practised tactics commonly attributed with horror and shame to the opposition. In defense the Anti-Saloon League maintains that it takes fire to put out fire. An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, has been its policy when expediency spoke. Such a policy is based upon the proposition that the end justifies the means. That is the trend of religious subsidiary reform movements that have lived off the church at large. If reformation requires a crook to catch a crook, it is not sur-

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prising that the church is becoming more and more suspicious of the professional reformer and social uplifter. Consequently the pulpits of the land are not as eager as formerly to welcome him. In fact, hundreds of pulpits are no longer available.

In the meantime, however, the church has become more daring with the social gospel than she used to be. Yet, so far as the local congregation is concerned, she is about as cautious as ever. But the reform business, which has been very largely supported by the church, still thrives. While she has become suspicious of organically unattached reform movements over which she has had no direct control, she has developed and put into the field a secretarial force to which she is more and more intrusting the application of the social gospel. Several denominations now have their own social-reform bureaus, agencies, and organizations which are responsible to the denomination and which are controlled with the same directness as that which applies to the missionary and benevolent agencies of the church.

The significant thing about this more recent development in the church is that these denominational social-reform agencies tend to drift toward Washington, D. C. The Methodists, for example, have established a powerful institution in our national capital. Why locate in Washington? They are following in the footsteps of the organizations that they have superseded. They seek primarily to bring pressure to bear upon legislation. Will they become any less scrupulous as time goes on than the agencies previously supported by the money which now supports them? We have no assurance that denominational control of church agencies is a guaranty to infallibility. The same demand that success be attained which brought so much pressure upon previously unattached organizations will be made upon these denominational reform boards. In reality, so far as the local congregation is concerned, the situation is about the same. The layman who now contributes to social reforms through his denominational agency knows but very little more about its real policy than he knew about the policy of the unattached and uncontrolled agencies that he formerly supported. The only difference is that his faith in the church has not been shaken, as it has been in the Anti-Saloon League, for example. So, in addition to the support still given to the unattached social-reform agencies, the church is generously supporting her own denominational reform agencies. With the same demands made upon these agencies that were made upon the unattached agencies, the church may expect to find the layman's faith shaken in her sooner or later if present policies are pursued.

The influence wielded by the church directly upon legislation is no longer a dream. So real has it become that much of the church, even among the masses, is becoming intoxicated with power. History certainly sustains our fear of the danger that, once the church realizes her political power, which expresses itself directly in legislation, the element of persuasion will cease to be a virtue.

The church can never hope to fulfil her mission in the world on any basis save that of persuasion, reason, and education. There is nothing that kills the teachableness in man any quicker than the application of force. Educators, after long years of experience and study

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of the problems, are now telling us that we cannot expect to develop men by forcing culture down them. The only way by which men are developed is by pulling out of them that which is in them rather than forcing into them that which does not find a natural and sympathetic reception from within. The moment the church forgets that redemption comes from within, by the root of education, reason, and persuasion, her destiny is about at an end so far as her contribution to a permanent social order is concerned.

There is the question of prohibition, for example. It is a subject upon which most of us have given some consideration. For years the church and subsidiary organizations that were specifically of a reform nature taught temperance, reasoned with men, and persuaded them, until prohibition became a law. Many of us have no personal objections to the law. But since prohibition has become a law, what has become of teaching, education, and persuasion on the question of temperance? We seldom hear anything about it. Law-enforcement has taken its place, and we are now rearing a generation that knows little or nothing about liquor save that it is against the law to possess it and use it. Whether the law is a good law or a bad law, it can never be enforced by merely enforcing it. The argument is sometimes advanced in support of the prohibition law that it is unlawful to commit murder. Why not do away with the law on murder? The fact of the matter is that the law has precious little to do with prohibiting murder. It takes something more than the law to restrain murder. Not until the violation of a law is felt to be an insult to society by both the lawbreaker and the law-abider can a law ever become effective and remain so. It is in the realm where legal effectiveness is produced that the church makes her lasting and permanent contribution to society. It is in the realm where force is least effective that the church is destined to do her redemptive work.

Immorality, when it is in the heart, will express itself. If it cannot find an outlet in one way, it readily finds it in another. Consequently there is no end to and no hope in the legislation of morals. Such a programme is a futile one; yet the application of the social gospel is not a futile one.

There is a developing wing of thought in the Protestant Church, primarily in the pastorate, that believes in the social gospel but that is becoming more and more suspicious of the present trend in the application of it. These men, who constitute a growing group, are not returning to a gospel of watchful waiting until the judgment day, when the Lord is expected to right all our social ills, but they are preaching a gospel of life that can be administered to society and made effective only in and through the individual. Group or mass salvation by groups and masses is to them an idle dream. The gospel is to them a social gospel, but individualistic in that its socialism is confined first to the production of social beings rather than a society. If the experience of the past is of sufficient value upon which to venture a prophecy, this latter group is on the right road.

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New Negroes for Old

BY HARRISON RHODES
Author of "How to Be Ill," "How to Deal with the Doctor," etc.

An American Negro, of a blackness which of late years seems to be fading from the race, was recently taken to Italy in service, and there was known by a Venetian girl who cooked for one of his employer's friends. To this gentleman she came one day with a rather startling plan for his servant's future. She knew, so she said, an admirable and easy way for the dark man to become light. All he had to do was to wash, night and morning, in milk which had been boiled and allowed afterward to cool. He would soon become white. There could be no doubt, she asserted, of the efficacy of the plan; she had herself known Sicilians who had employed the method, and had become much lighter in color. She admitted that in a place like Venice, where milk was not very good, and was very expensive, the "patient" might be well advised to begin by making only the face and hands white, and only upon his return to America to bleach the whole body. Then she added, with pious and reverent enthusiasm, he might become a Catholic, and so, she rather prettily and touchingly concluded, he would be white not only without but within.

It was a project of which so much might be said that it cannot all be said here. The immediate question in Venice became whether this particular Negro wanted to become white. Do Negroes want to become white? Are they not in America already becoming so? It is not meant in actual color of the skin. There is no intention of discussing miscegenation or any such matters. But is the Negro really becoming white within and without? Some people seem to fear that he is. This, if a compliment, is at least double-edged. One might stop to ask, just how well do we think of to-day's whites?

It is quite true that if Abraham Lincoln could for a brief period revisit this land, he would in many ways scarcely recognize the Union he preserved or the race he freed. Of the Negroes, he would find even some of the physical and outward characteristics changed, especially of the females of that race. No one can say what hair-straightening may yet mean to the colored people. Topsy is already out of fashion—soon she may be non-existent, and with her may have passed a great deal that the whites liked. The Topsy of to-day has bobbed and waved hair instead of crinkly wool. Her cheeks are often flushed with rouge, her lips carmined. She is freely covered with powder. Her clothes are, nowadays, of the smartest fashion. Her skirts are as short as the next one's; she does not hesitate to dispense with sleeves, and in the morning to wear any kind of openwork, which in happier, earlier, and more primitive days would idiomatically have been said to "let the meat show." If you should meet her out walking, even in some desolate backwoods, you would find that she has the most modish high heels and silk stock-

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ings of the universal "sunkist" color. The old handkerchief worn like a turban is as rare as a broad-brimmed hat —it is all just like any white young girl.

The change is more than external. With the vastly improved financial condition of the Negro (if it be essentially so great an improvement), his life too is changing. Black people's houses are now being built with quite enough bathrooms to wash them white within and without. They have their radios, their phonographs, their theatres, both moving-picture and the old-fashioned or real kind; their restaurants, both the day and the night kind. Their music has conquered the world, and to it they dance everywhere publicly the Charleston and the Black-Bottom.

It is very common, in rich centres like Harlem, that a colored person will say, in answer to any questions about vacation plans, that he or she is going abroad for the summer. It is nothing, so it is freely said, for Negroes to go to Europe. Blacks travelling in Europe are not yet as usual as whites, though only last winter in a smart, rather distinguished hotel in one of the European capitals, there were a couple of Negroes, man and wife, staying in excellent rooms on their return from a trip around the world. Paris, always in advance, already finds it necessary to advertise an all-white cabaret, though this guaranty may possibly refer to the stage rather than to the audience.

In America itself Negro luxury is not unknown: there are occasional colored people who go to our great resorts, and such a thing as a yacht at, say, Palm Beach is not unknown. Years ago, at a banquet of Negroes in a private room of a French restaurant in New York, a leading guest turned down his wineglass, a fact which amused me very much when I heard of it. The glass was an idea of the proprietor, who hoped it would be needed. Yet if there had been wine, this colored gentleman had shown his views.

It may as well be realized that there is no possibility of stopping the spread of knowledge in America. Years ago a famous Southern senator said bitterly that "If a nigger knows anything, he can always go behind a scrub-palmetto and tell another nigger." You can't educate one person and leave all the others in ignorance. You can't have America growing in wealth every year and one race alone in the community staying where it was. Delightful and wise as it might be, you cannot have it both ways. There is no possible necessity of discussing the value and beauty of progress. The fact is that the world, in every part of it, *does move*. There may be all kinds of astonishing things in store for us.

It is, for example, the firm conviction of the writer that domestic service is a thing doomed soon enough wholly to disappear from the world. Some people say that then, of course, we must all employ Negro servants. Yes, surely, if we can get them. But by that time it is possible that the Negro may feel as strong an antipathy to the profession as the Caucasian does now and, unless slavery can be reintroduced, not much can be done about it. And this is not likely!

Any one who knows anything about Negro education of course recognizes the old point of view of the patron who seemed to feel that colored schools, especially industrial ones, were really running to provide servants for distressed white housewives. Some of the Negroes, either the most outrageous or

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the wisest, said that they didn't especially object to white women's learning to cook, but that their great object was to elevate their own race, and nothing else.

All these matters are, however, controversial, and so may be left aside. The point to be made and admitted is that a certain feeling of disappointment is being felt by that part of the public which has been, often for so long, interested in the welfare of Negroes, and in the many institutions designed to improve them. And this feeling must be well examined and faced by all those of either race who have the interests of the colored race at heart. Some of those who have striven to elevate the black man probably may now fear (although they are not always quite frank about saying so) that they have succeeded too well; have, in fact, elevated him too high.

They find he is now too civilized, too prosperous, and so disinclined to work; too self-assured, too rich, and as they would possibly put it, too much inclined to feel himself a citizen and an American.

On this last point something may be said. It used to be said of Negroes that it was not their fault that they were slaves; it might now, with equal justice, be said that it is not their fault that they are free. If emancipation had not come when it did, it might probably have come now or a little before, at least so many philosophers think, and the wish to be American is violently contagious. And, indeed, we can scarcely complain of that. We are, most of us, inclined to feel that this is a great country; really it is as much America's fault as the Negro's if he wants to be American. If it is our doing that he is free, we, not he, ought to be blamed for the evil consequences, if there be any. People say he does not "know his place." But events and the change of the world have done much to confuse him as to exactly where his "place" is. To-day almost no one does know that about himself.

The truth really is that the Negro has lost his special character, that is, the peculiar individual quality that marked him and unquestionably pleased many of us who liked him and wished to be his benefactors. Gradually he is coming to speak almost like the whites, unless, as sometimes happens with the better-educated Negroes, he speaks a little better. His voice was always pleasant enough. When the words were ignorant and comic, that was all right, but when they are at least as correct as our own, the soft voice becomes almost a reproach. And the well-beloved true Negro words, where are they? Where, indeed, would be Mrs. Malaprop without her mistakes? Her chances would be pretty "puny," to employ the word that still may be occasionally heard. The fact is that, modernized, the Negro is no longer "quaint." He has unhappily almost lost his charm.

But is not charm a thing which is everywhere disappearing from the world? Is that not why people try to revive folk-singing and dancing, and in some European country districts put all the hotel servants in what, of old, used to be the peasant costumes, under the assumption that charm can so easily be called back? Is there, in fact, from certain points of view, any one part of the world, or any one man in the world, any more spoiled than any other? Charm indeed has now become a matter of theatrical production. If we whites want charming blacks, we may be able to get them on the stage, though

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probably they will be masquerading whites—black-faced artists.

This must be thought of in any attempt to do justice to the present state of the so-called Negro problem. And one must remember solemnly how many years' tears and blood have been shed over it, and how many martyrs, black and white, have suffered in the cause of freedom. Now that freedom has, at least partly, come, is it to either white or black less sweet? But there is no doubt that again the Negro race is on trial.

Of course, perhaps so also is the white. It was a great pleasure to try to help a race so greatly in need of being helped, to uplift one so definitely down. It was constantly flattering to the self-esteem of the helper. Now things are ever so little changed. But perhaps more wisdom and more real goodness than ever are needed to help the Negro now that his case seems less pitiable, less spectacular, less moving emotionally. The process of a race growing accustomed to being no longer wholly inferior and without rights, but now with admittedly some rights, a race which has so long drunk of our fountains in America that it is constantly being tempted to feel itself wholly American —such a process is sure to be full of difficulties. If it is hard to be an inferior race, it is as hard to be a superior race—it is, perhaps for both, even harder to be just Americans in the truest and best sense of the word.

If for the time being the whites are less interested in helping the Negro, it is time for him to help himself. Perhaps then the God he so thoroughly believes in will help him. For many years there will be many whites who will want to help what seems to them the "underdog." But the time has probably come for the black to bear some of the burden which the white is inclined to cast down; some of the new prosperity, some of the new education, some of the new pride of race, if it really exists, must be turned to the service of race. There must be new sacrifices, new sufferings. But a new hallelujah will go up from all who have watched the Negro tread the long road that led from slavery toward the future. And Abraham Lincoln could come back.

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Tragedy

BY EVE BERNSTEIN

Illustration by Paul Martin

It was nine o'clock when Bart opened his eyes. Surely there must be something the matter with the clock. He stared at the hands for fully a minute. Some member of the family always called him at eight. According to this, he was already late for school. If the clock was right, it was useless to hurry now, and if it was wrong, well, he had a few minutes anyway. He closed his eyes again, reflecting upon the fact that to-morrow he would be nine years old, and his father had promised him a silver wrist-watch. It would be wonderful having one to show the boys. It would make them open their eyes.

Suddenly he heard a stifled sob. A strange, ominous silence followed—a terrifying silence that made his blood run cold. Perhaps mamma was worse. She had been so sick the night before. He sprang out of bed and ran to her room.

Aunt Mil met him at the door of his mother's room and led him out before he could see her. There were tears in her eyes, and her face was contorted as if with pain.

"Now don't cry, Bart," she whispered. "Mother has been very sick, you know. A little while ago she passed away. You may go in to see her a little later. She will never speak to you again. You will never, never see her any more." And she burst into sobbing, pressing Bart close to her side.

Then she dried her eyes and slipped back into the room. Bart looked in from the door. At first he could see nothing except his father who was sitting on the edge of the bed, his head bent and his broad shoulders heaving ever so slightly. His father was crying, and he had never cried before. Bart's throat contracted. A slight movement of his father's arm revealed the lifeless form on the bed. Bart stood motionless. It was hard to comprehend just what had happened. Just a few minutes before, his mother could talk and laugh, and now she was silent, and so very, very white. He walked into the room and stood by the bed, unable to keep his eyes off the body that had been his mother's, but he did not weep. A little later, however, when they were all in the living-room, Bart could not stop thinking about it. It was that—death — that happened to everybody. It would happen to father, and to Aunt Mil—and to him, and perhaps it would be to-day or to-morrow or the day after. One could never tell. Was it like going to sleep? But no, it couldn't be. How would it feel not to know what was going on? And mamma! She would never talk to him again.

He began to cry softly. Gradually his crying became loud, uncontrollable sobbing. He became hysterical. He quieted down intermittently, only to go into another spasm. His father held him on his lap and rocked him as if he were an infant. When his weeping

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had turned into sporadic sobbing, he helped him to dress and turned him over to Aunt Mil for some breakfast.

When twelve o'clock came, Bart seated himself at the window to watch the boys on their way home. Three of them had stopped in front of the house for a game of potsy. One drew the squares carefully on the sidewalk with a piece of chalk, and the other two looked around for little stones with which to play the game. When action started, Bart pictured himself skipping triumphantly over the squares and kicking the stone in just the right place each time. He knew he could do as well as any of them. His face brightened. He got up quickly, left the house, and joined the boys. He would show them! Oh, yes—and he must tell them why he was not at school.

A week later, in the quiet of a bereaved household, Bart was preparing for his return to school. As he dressed himself, he regarded his reflection in the mirror. He was pale and a trifle worn. When he had finished dressing, he walked down the stairs slowly, quietly, conscious that he was the centre of an event of tremendous importance. At breakfast Aunt Mil looked at him with eyes that said: "You poor boy, I understand." And Bart was overcome with self-pity. Then, when his father left him with a "See you tonight, old man," he expanded his chest and stretched himself to his full height, realizing all the importance of his nine years. He liked that—"Bart, old man"—and he repeated it to himself all the way to school.

During the entire week that Bart had been at home, he had looked forward to his return to the classroom. He had never liked school, but he knew that on that first day he would be the one absorbing interest. As he walked into the room, his head throbbed with excitement. Every face had been turned to him, and he felt burning, envious glances from the boys as well as soft, compassionate ones from the girls. He greeted those nearest to him with a perfunctory nod, noticing the while that the teacher had looked at him rather intently and then turned away, as if she did not wish to be caught watching him.

Bart had never before anticipated any class with such enthusiasm as he did the one in arithmetic that day. He despised the subject. In spite of his father's many lectures in regard to the matter, he had never been able to make himself study for it, and Miss Miller was never wrong in anticipating a "zero" mark for him every time she called upon him for a recitation. But to-day was different. He had not prepared his lesson, of course, and he could sit through the entire period with a clear conscience. There was an excuse for his unpreparedness. He leaned back in his seat with an expression of deep concentration while the recitation was going on, without hearing a word of what was said. He was conscious of his pallor—and his tragedy—and still more conscious of the sly glances that came his way from every direction of the room. Suddenly the expression of profound concentration changed to one of dejection and despair. He had a way of drawing his mouth down at the corners which he knew was effective. A tear trickling down his colorless cheek just then would be most appropriate, and Bart found that it was not an insurmountable difficulty. It came, another followed, and then he blew his nose violently. He wiped the tears away

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It was Miss Miller's first opportunity to tell him how sorry she was.

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quickly with his hand and looked up at Miss Miller with his liquid eyes which told the story of his utter misery. Miss Miller saw what he wanted her to see. Her usually stern, hard lips parted for just an instant in a smile of sweetness and understanding. She, who had always been so inimical to him! Bart felt an inner gratification at this sudden turn of affairs.

Recess time came. It was Miss Miller's first opportunity to tell him how sorry she was. Her long, thin face with its greenish-gray eyes, which always reminded Bart of a cat's eyes, suddenly became kind, and he saw—this he would never forget—a tiny tear working its way into the corner. Bart was glad that the boys had looked back on their way out of the room in time to see Miss Miller bending over his desk and talking to him in a low voice. When she had left, he lifted himself from his seat slowly and reluctantly, and walked out of the building.

He did not join the other boys in their games. He merely stood near the stone steps and watched them running over the playground, some roller-skating, some jumping rope, some racing, others playing ball. Two boys passed, singing a school song, and Bart puckered up his mouth to join them in a whistle. Just in time he remembered—and his face became morose once more.

At the other end of the field Chet Parks, who had dropped out of a game of handball, stood watching him, hesitating as to whether or not to approach Bart. The memory of a previous scrap was still fresh in their minds. Now Bart felt exultant. Chet was envious of the tragedy which had made Bart such an outstanding figure of importance, and now he longed to be friendly again, if only to "show" the other boys a thing or two. He was merely waiting for a word from Bart to run over to him and grasp his hand warmly. But Bart pretended that he did not even see him. Slowly the other came, as if almost afraid to approach him, and still Bart simulated preoccupation. Then he heard his voice.

"Want to join a game of handball, Bart?" softly, sheepishly. For he now felt that nothing could be quite so wonderful, in spite of the fact that he was jealous of Bart, as to be able to show the other boys that he—and not the others—was in Bart's confidence.

"Not now, Chet. Thanks." The barrier had been broken. It was really what both of them had wanted all along, and each rejoiced that to-morrow they would again be walking together on the playgrounds.

Late that afternoon Bart walked home alone. None of the boys had had the courage to offer his companionship. He thought of the events of the day with a sense of satisfaction and reviewed each incident in his mind. Then he thought of to-morrow, his meeting with Chet, and the compassionate face of Miss Miller. Perhaps after all he would try to prepare a good arithmetic lesson for to-morrow.

He soon found himself humming the music of his school song, and when he came to the part where one phrase is repeated twice, he sang the words to it, "For the good old L. G. School," and then sang them again. He continued to repeat the same phrase over and over again, each time in a different key, finally starting in bass and ending way up in treble until his young thin voice became nothing but a screech. As he continued to sing in the same impossible key, he tried the phrase with increased speed each time, as well as with

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a different note at the end. He walked in time with the music.

As he neared the house, he could not help thinking of the tea Aunt Mil would have ready for him, and the luscious piece of orange cake—or muffins.

And as he walked up the steps of his house slowly and deliberately, conscious of his pallor and the awful tragedy in his home, feeling old and experienced, he sang the last line of his school song in the key of G.

The Cloud-Racer

By Katharine Day Little

"Oh, years and years ago, I used to race
The clouds," he pondered, paused, and I could see
Again, how, lifting ardent eyes, he'd run
Across the meadow, till his chosen cloud,
His own, most special cloudlet, suddenly
Was fringed with white intolerable light,
So blinding that he halted, panting, there
Where through long grasses wanders slowly on
Our thread of brook, too small to mirror clouds.
"And you can see now if you look," he says,
And lifts me up a most important knee,
All sweetly rounded still, all bare and brown,
"Here's where I fell once, racing with my cloud.
But that, of course, was long ago," he said,
Eyes heavy with the passing wraiths of years—
The five eternities that intervene
Between those madcap hours, and soberer days
More suited to the stately age of ten.
"Oh, years and years ago, I raced the clouds!"

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As I Like It

BY WILLIAM LYON PHELPS

I was particularly interested in the choice of the pall-bearers; not merely because of the fact that six men of such literary distinction could not possibly be found among Americans, but because not a single one of the six is known exclusively as a novelist. Ever since the year 1898 Thomas Hardy had wished to be known as a poet or dramatist, rather than novelist; he firmly believed that his poems were better than his novels, that they more accurately expressed his personality, and that after his death he would be among the English poets. His career as a novelist lasted twenty-five years, and as a poet thirty years. He published seven volumes of lyrics, and it is believed and hoped that another volume will appear; he published two poetical tragedies: "The Dynasts" and "The Queen of Cornwall." He felt strongly that American critics had not, as a rule, sufficiently emphasized the importance of his poems; he felt that Americans still regarded him as the author of "Tess" and of "The Return of the Native."

It is interesting to remember that an exact parallel can be found in the case of his friend and contemporary, the late George Meredith. He always insisted that fiction was his kitchen wench, whereas poetry was his muse.

Therefore, at the funeral of Hardy in Westminster Abbey, the choice of pall-bearers emphasized the poet and dramatist, rather than the novelist—Sir James Barrie, Bernard Shaw, Rudyard Kipling, Alfred E. Housman, John Galsworthy, Sir Edmund Gosse. Every one of these men, except Mr. Housman, has published novels; but Barrie and Shaw are known almost exclusively as dramatists, Galsworthy is as well known as a playwright as he is as a novelist, Kipling is more distinguished for his poetry than his prose, Gosse is a poet and critic, and Housman a lyrical poet. Had it been Hardy the novelist who was buried in the Abbey, the pall-bearers might have included H. G. Wells, Arnold Bennett, Hugh Walpole.

From the king to the humblest peasant, there was sincere mourning for the death of Hardy; his eminence in four fields of art—architecture, prose-fiction, drama, and lyrical poetry—would have made him a world figure, but the beauty of his character, his sympathy, kindliness, modesty, gentleness, made an equally deep impression on all sorts and conditions of men.

With all my heart I hope that Mrs. Hardy will write the life of her great husband; she knew him better than any one else, she is herself a professional author, and she has the requisite taste and intelligence.

In the New York *Herald Tribune* for January 22 there is an article by Ford Madox Ford on Thomas Hardy which among many interesting remarks contains the astounding statement that Ford heard Hardy say he was a practising member of the Anglican

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Church. To be sure, Samuel Butler said that his own views were the same as those held by the advanced wing of the Broad Church; but the diabolical Butler was a master of irony, and that remark was a two-edged sword. Now whatever Hardy was, he was emphatically not a hypocrite; he had less of hypocrisy than of anything else. What on earth did Hardy mean? If he was reported as saying that he loved the church ritual and often attended the services, well and good; he was brought up in the Church, was an ecclesiastical architect, and must have loved the old traditions. Probably no man ever had less respect for God and more respect for His house. But a practising member? Then John Morley was a Fundamentalist and Leslie Stephen an Evangelical Methodist.

I have in my library a little book published over three hundred years ago. The title is "A General Survey of All Knowledge." I have often shown it to visitors, who have shared my amusement in its comprehensive name, and I have often declared how impossible it would be to set forth such a work in these days of specialized research. But now comes the American poet and critic Clement Wood and launches one volume of 650 pages, called "The Outline of Man's Knowledge. The Story of History, Science, Literature, Art, Religion, Philosophy." So that's that. If you want to know enough of everything to talk intelligently on anything, all you have to do is to buy this book. Naturally, the author has not sufficient time for many qualifications. Abraham Lincoln is admiringly called "gentle Abraham Lincoln, rationalist and atheist from the age of twenty-nine to his death." I don't know which appellation he would have resented more, "gentle" or "atheist." Again: "Serene Greece and Palestine produced serene gods." Serene? If the Greek gods were alive to-day, every one of them would be in jail. Golly, what a book!

If one wishes to know what the Episcopal Church in America thinks of religion and these present times, I recommend "Christ in the World of To-day, A record of the Church Congress in the United States on its fifty-third anniversary." There is an Introduction by Bishop Slattery, and the main subjects discussed in separate addresses are: "Moral Standards in an Age of Change," "New Thought and Health Cults," "How Can Christianity Satisfy the Religious Needs of All Races?"—Catholic and Protestant points of view—"The Relation of Christianity to Political and Industrial Democracy," "Some Aids to Personal Religion," etc. This is a book filled with information and bristling with suggestions.

Here is a new book by an eminent scientist, "The New Reformation," by Michael Pupin. This is written for the general public, and by a man who knows what he is talking about. It is a work of learning, of wisdom, of inspiration.

Last night Emil Ludwig came to New Haven to lecture on Bismarck, and I had the pleasure of a long and intimate talk with him. I was impressed not only by the range of his knowledge but by the sincerity and charm of his character. He is a very remarkable person, even greater than his already great reputation. After the lecture, he answered questions flung at him by members of the audience; and, although he was at a disadvantage by the exchange being conducted in English, his answers

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were so witty and so wise that he captivated his hearers.

It is seldom that I read the biography of a well-known man and find my conception of his character completely changed; though I often read the biography of a w. k. m. and find that my opinion of the biographer is even lower and more contemptuous than the opinion he wishes me to hold of his intended victim. But I have just read "The Father of Little Women," by Honoré Willsie Morrow, with the result that my feelings toward A. Bronson Alcott have been altered from black to white. I had always thought that he would have been an excellent specimen for the third book of "Gulliver's Travels"; that he had the eccentricities of genius without genius; that he was compounded in equal parts of crank and bore; that the only good thing he ever produced was Louisa.

Well, I advise any others who know as little about him as I did to read this biography, in which Mrs. Morrow quotes copiously from his diaries. As a school-teacher, he seems to have been about two hundred years ahead of his time. He actually thought pupils—even very young ones—should be encouraged to do their own thinking.

Unlike some teachers, he was entirely willing that his pupils should at any time be publicly tested; and, although his audacity in publishing the answers that his pupils gave cost him his job, and permanently stopped his career, no one can read these "Conversations on the Gospel" (pp. 166-187) without marvelling at the results obtained by Alcott's methods. The exact words of the children are printed. Remember that only two of the children were twelve years old; the others were ten or under.

I ought to have known that Alcott had a great mind; because Emerson thought so, and it was impossible to deceive Emerson in a matter of that kind.

Tom Cushing has published in attractive form his successful play, "The Devil in the Cheese," which had such a long and prosperous run at Charles Hopkins's theatre in New York last year.

The accomplished actress Peggy Wood has written a little book on the beloved John Drew, called "A Splendid Gypsy." Her account of the trip across the United States taken by the all-star company with "Trelawny of the Wells" is highly entertaining, and the tribute to Mr. Drew is beautiful in its homage and tenderness. The book proves that in addition to her histrionic gifts Peggy Wood is a literary artist.

On January 9, at the Shubert Theatre in New Haven, and under the direction of Winthrop Ames, Mr. George Arliss, for the first time in his life, appeared in a Shakespearian rôle. It was a memorable night. The play ran smoothly, it was steadily interesting, the whole cast was adequate, Peggy Wood made a brilliant and charming Portia, neglecting the statuesque for the human; but naturally the chief interest centred on Mr. Arliss's interpretation of Shylock. I had seen in this rôle Edwin Booth, Henry Irving, Richard Mansfield, Walter Hampden, Edward Sothern, Ernst von Possart, David Warfield. Edwin Booth was the most terrifying; he was an awe-inspiring monster, and his final cry, "Come, *prepare*," still rings in my ears. The poorest was Henry Irving, for it seemed to me that in representing him as a sympathetic character he ceased to be impressive. Mr. Arliss made him sinister but thoroughly human; he was a patrician; he had that air toward his

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Christian adversaries that comes only from a sense of superiority; he knew and they knew that they had need of him, for they wanted money and he had it. He spoke his lines quietly but with a suggestion of illimitable reserved power. Next to his Disraeli, I think Shylock is Mr. Arliss's greatest performance. The whole production showed the impeccable taste and intelligence and artistic skill characteristic of Winthrop Ames.

Speaking of the eternally interesting subject of words, I hail with joy the latest (I fervently hope not the last) book by the accomplished Professor Ernest Weekley, of University College, Nottingham, called "More Words, Ancient and Modern." This book deals only with compounds, "obvious or disguised." His preface is disarming: "The author feels a certain diffidence in reappearing so soon in print, but he has reason to believe that a small but kindly public is good enough to take an interest in his etymological recreations and to regard with gentle tolerance his incurable habit of wandering from the point." Look up the following words: *blue-stocking*, *cheesemonger*, *hodge-podge*, *point-blank*, *tenter-hooks*, *Tuesday*. The average man can give you the origin of all the days of the week except *Tuesday*. Try him on that.

An extremely good book on health and the care of the body is "What You Should Know About Health and Disease," written by Doctor Howard W. Haggard, with an Introduction by Professor Yandell Henderson. All the organs and various parts of the body are described and explained, and there are over seventy illustrations. In addition to these clear descriptions, plenty of sound advice is given as to the preservation of health, prevention of disease, and its cure. I have never seen a better book of the kind for young men and women. It is a pity that the publishers made it so intolerably heavy, as it is a gymnastic exercise to hold it. Perhaps that was the intention. The only omission I noticed was advice about bathing. Cleanliness is of course constantly emphasized, but as to hot, cold, or tepid baths I found no information.

I wish to nominate for the Ignoble Prize the *Cold Bath*. Thousands of middle-aged and elderly men and women apparently regard it as necessary to go through this sacrificial rite every morning, and at any time after exercise. I believe that many, very many, have seriously injured themselves and shortened their lives by icy bathing. It is all right, perhaps desirable, for boys and girls in sound and rugged health. Until I was nearly forty I labored under the delusion that an ice-cold bath early in the morning and immediately after violent exercise was the proper thing. I finally gave it up because of the ill effects that followed it. But for many years after, I thought it necessary to follow a hot bath with very cold water; I thought it was dangerous to take a hot bath without an icy chaser. Well, that is all nonsense. A hot bath and a good rub, that is my prescription; leave the horrible ice to those who insist on martyrdom. Remember that Dante made the lowest pit of hell consist of ice.

I also nominate for the Ignoble Prize those who take the icy bath and brag about it. Folly is bad enough in itself without boasting of it.

I recommend, not to sophisticated but to intelligent and enlightened readers, Maurice Baring's new novel, "Tinker's Leave." This is a charming and

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original story, laid in England, Paris, and Russia. The characters are highly diverting; the early scenes in Paris will remind one somewhat of Sanger's circus in "The Constant Nymph." Maurice Baring is one of my favorite authors; there is a quality in his books that irresistibly appeals to me. . . . I call the attention of the editor and publishers of this Magazine to the fact that the hero goes to the Japanese front in the Russian War as a photographer for what the Russians call *Skreibner's Magazine*, the most important periodical published in New York. (Advt.)

Mr. Baring is as ignorant of astronomy as other novelists; he has a crescent moon rising after sunset.

The American poet, critic, and philosopher, T. S. Eliot, delivered an address in England before the Shakespeare Association on March 18, 1927, on "Shakespeare and the Stoicism of Seneca." It has since been published, and I confidently recommend it to Shakespeare students. It is full of pungent criticism of Shakespeare, of books on Shakespeare, and of human nature. And yet I think his interpretation of Othello's last speech is only partly true. Mr. Eliot says:

> What Othello seems to me to be doing in making this speech is *cheering himself up*. He is endeavouring to escape reality, he has ceased to think about Desdemona, and is thinking about himself. Humiliation is the most difficult of all virtues to achieve; nothing dies harder than the desire to think well of oneself. Othello succeeds in turning himself into a pathetic figure, by adopting an *æsthetic* rather than a moral attitude, dramatising himself against his environment. He takes in the spectator, but the human motive is primarily to take in himself.

This is interesting, and the reader of this paragraph should turn to that last tragic speech and test it for himself. I cannot agree with Mr. Eliot that Othello has ceased to think about Desdemona; it is because he cannot stop thinking about her that he kills himself.

An excellent travel-book is "Morocco from a Motor," by Paul E. Vernon, with 48 full-page illustrations in color. It is written in a sprightly fashion, and one envies the author his experiences. All those who can afford it should follow suit.

The young American poet Lucius Beebe has produced an admirable critical essay, "Edwin Arlington Robinson and the Arthurian Legend," in which he discusses the three poems, "Merlin," "Lancelot," and "Tristram," pointing out the philosophy underlying these works of art. This is thoughtful and penetrating criticism; there is so much interest in Robinson's masterpiece, "Tristram," that this new interpretation of its significance should find many readers.

It is not often I am able to print a hitherto unpublished letter of Browning's; but my friend Charles Sessler, of the famous bookshop in Philadelphia, made me a Christmas present.

> 19. Warwick Crescent, W.
> Nov. 10. '77
>
> My dear Mr. Kingsland,
>
> I make haste to inform you that I never heard till this moment of your calling here—which needed no kind of apology: I shall always be delighted to see you, and so will my sister—on whom, if I am away, you may generally count. But we were, both of us abroad for two months—all August and September—and your visit may have occurred during our absence.
>
> I well know your kind sympathy and generous zeal; it has been very good of you to speak up for me so boldly. That omitted line has long been observed and regretted by me —it happened thro' the printer's leaving out the previous leaf, as it stood in the original edition; and *this* edition being stereotyped

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does not allow of the insertion I would gladly effect: should I be able in a future edition to replace the line, I will certainly do so.

This is a hurried note,—as I am obliged to go out; but it answers its purpose if it repeats my thanks—and induces *you* to repeat your visit to

Yours cordially ever
R. Browning.

Browning was often embarrassed by his admirers; but he was grateful for Kingsland's support.

My State of Connecticut has three smashing big rivers; reading from left to right, they are the Housatonic, the Connecticut, and the Thames. I have always pronounced the last-named like its English prototype, *Tems*. Last week I heard an address by President Marshall, of Connecticut College, which is situated on the bank of this river, and he called it Tems. Now I am informed by Edward P. Eggleston, of New London, that the correct pronunciation is Thames, "th" as in thin, and the word rhyming with James. Mr. Eggleston wrote to the U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey at Washington, and he was informed that the English and Canadian rivers of that name are called Tems, but the Connecticut one must be called Thāmz. On writing to the same authority again, he received further information to the effect that the dictionaries, etc., published in the nineteenth and early twentieth century gave Thāmz; but Webster's International Dictionary, which in 1907 gave only Thāmz, in 1926 gives *Tems*, "locally also thamz, tamz."

I imagine that the majority of New London people call it Thāmz, but Tems is gaining and is bound to win.

I am sorry to disappoint Mr. Eggleston, but I cannot possibly frame my mouth to say Thāmz.

I can say without ahems,
Yale beat Harvard on the Tems:
But of all outlandish rames,
Probably the worst is Thames.

For the Ignoble Prize, Doctor Anne E. Perkins, of Helmuth, N. Y., nominates "insofar."

Nearly every day brings me a letter from some Ailurian, and if I thought that the majority of my readers shared my adoration of cats, I would gladly print more of these epistles. Here is a note from A. Merton, of Pasadena, Calif.:

In an introduction to Walter Pater's "Renaissance" Arthur Symons said Walter Pater was particularly fond of cats, especially of a great black Persian that shared the study of his London house. Once at Oxford he told me that M. Bourget had sent him the first volume of his "Essais de Psychologie Contemporaine," and that the cat had got hold of the book and torn up the part containing the essay on Baudelaire and "as Baudelaire was such a lover of cats I thought she might have spared him!"

A curious omission (which I have never observed) is noted for me by Theodore Mack, of Fort Worth, Texas:

Speaking of "Ignoble Prizes" are you aware that the average Texan is oblivious of the past tense? In my forty years practice in Texas, I have heard the average Texan time and again use the expression, "I *taken* cold"; "I *taken* my car, etc."; "He *taken* his departure" etc., etc. So often have I heard the "linguistic lapse," that I have often wondered whether my English was at fault? In reading testimony given in the trial courts, listening to alleged preachers and persons who ordinarily employ pure English, my experience has been that my fellow citizens as a rule believe that the word "took" is obsolete. You know that there are some persons who repeat a lie so often, that with each iteration and reiteration they verily believe the statement to be true. And it may be that hearing the error so repeatedly my mind becomes obfuscated.

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On the important question of trial by jury, I have received an excellent proposal from Mr. C. R. Russell, of West Haven, Conn.:

As you know there has been some and I might say, much controversy over our present jury system. As it is now great hardship is often brought about by calling men from their labors, clerical or otherwise; I know what it means to go before a judge and beg to be excused from serving. It takes on the nature of humiliation, and makes a man feel small as if he was shirking the duties he owes to the laws of the land.

There are at the present time a great many elderly men (I am one) out of employment, chiefly on account of grey hairs which mean the approach of latter days.

My suggestion would be to have permanent juries made up of these elderly men, many of whom have keen active minds and when on duty their thoughts are not running away from the court room nor are they thinking how much their regular work is running behind.

F. Q.

Had the Faery Queene Club done nothing except to draw the following letter, it would have justified itself. Let me add that the handwriting is as legible as print, and the hand apparently as firm as a sculptor's.

Lombard, Ill., 17 Jan. 1928.

I am asking to be let into the Faerie Queen Club, and, as I am at the middle of my ninety-ninth year, perhaps you will seat me among the seniors at the feast.

I found myself reading the F. Q. somewhat philologically. In my boyhood I was exposed, for a year or more, to the archaisms and clownisms of a fearfully belated man, and I find much of his misfit vocabulary in Spenser.

If I should be set near the head of the table, I will send my bottle down the line to that little girl-child of sixteen whom you admitted in November.

Yours most truly,
JOSIAH T. READE.

Marshall M. Brice, head of the department of English at Staunton Military Academy, Virginia, writes that during the last three years he read the entire poem through four times, getting the original impetus from a course at the University of Wisconsin.

Lillian Ida Clearwater, of Arcola, Ill., read the whole poem in a "stall" at the Harvard College Library, in connection with a most stimulating course given at Radcliffe by Professor Lowes.

Dean Alice Logan Wingo, of the Berry Schools, Mount Berry, Ga., has just finished reading the F. Q., and writes that she has

. . . had genuine pleasure in reading it and taking notes on every canto of the six books and the fragment of the seventh. I wonder why no one had ever told me of the delightful pageant of seasons and months in the Canto VI, Book VII., with each month gaily riding in on his or her (only one *her*) sign of the Zodiac. I think it is delicious!

As to the Big Four, an interesting letter from Allan D. Millard, a civil engineer of Beardstown, Ill., informs me he is sure that Leland Stanford, Collis P. Huntington, Charles F. Crocker, and Mark Hopkins were the original Big Four.

And here is a letter written on a train by Robert Hammond Murray, of Mexico City:

About the Big Four, I've a vague recollection of having heard somewhere that the inspiration came from the mammoth of all Gargantuan Big Fours—four aces. This may be a clue. Perhaps one reason why "Gallegher" is not popular with journalists—one of which craft I used to be—is that it is a pretty bad newspaper story—in fact, one of the worst, judging it on a basis of what should go into a newspaper story to make it good, and realistic. I'm not saying this because I did not like Davis, for I knew him, and did like him and admired his pencraft as a whole.

Great is Copeland of the Harvardians, with me! For he put into his Reader that gem of all Christmas stories, Dickens' "Seven

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Poor Travelers," which as a seasonable tale can give the wallow-wash (excepting in spots) "Carol" cards and spades and tan its pelt off. In thus doing Copeland placed the 18 karat hall-mark upon his own critical judgment and vindicated the writer's years-long John-the-Baptisting among a desert and scoffing generation, wedded to its "Carol" idol.

Another suggestion on the Big Four comes from the music-composer Percy Lee Atherton:

I earnestly wish you would trace back the curious fact, not even mentioned in "Fowler's" (bought wholly on your recommendation): one of its few and disappointing omissions! of the apparently meaningless discrepancy between four and fourteen and forty! My *guess* is that it came about as a sort of protection in the surface resemblance between fourteen and forty (originally written, of course, fourty). But if this be so, why does no dictionary that I have consulted (and especially the otherwise all-satisfying "Fowler's") deign even to note the oddity?

Tima Newsom Sullivan, of Natchez, Miss., comments on John Galsworthy:

I'm sure that Mr. John Galsworthy knows his ENGLISH but I'm equally as sure that he does *not* know his SOUTHERN UNITED STATES. In his story in January SCRIBNER'S, A Silent Wooing, he had Francis Wilmot say, "The Harrisons can tote the others." We learn later that he means Harrison will transport the others in a car. No Southerner—and we are told that Wilmot is a Southerner—would use the word *tote* in that sense, Mr. Webster to the contrary. The word, as used in the South, has a meaning that sets it apart from all other words meaning to carry, or transport. It means to carry on or about the person. The negro *totes* his cotton-basket on his shoulder; the mammy *totes* her baby in her arms; the modern youth—so I've been told—*totes* his flask in his hip pocket. But to *tote a person in a car!* Ye gods and little fishes, we have never *hearn tell* of such!

Ignoble Prize? Yes!

Doctor Frederick T. Wright, of Douglas, Ariz., on *meticulous:*

I was out of the country the greater part of last year and did not see SCRIBNER, therefore missed your comments on "Modern English Usage." As it seemed to be a rather recent book, I thought it might not have come your way.

Have you time to listen a moment while I say something about *meticulous*? Many years ago an educated Englishman who seemed to know his Latin, (at any rate he carried a pocket edition of Horace about with him), suggested to me, or rather asserted, that this word is derived from the Latin *meta*, being the word for the goal-posts which were set up in the stadium at opposite ends of the race-course. Obviously it was the aim of the charioteers to make their turns just as closely as possible to the *metae*. The closer they came the better their chances. I am not enough of a philologist to know whether such a derivation is conceivable, but it seems a much more satisfactory derivation, if one may so speak, than from *metus*. If one is meticulous in the sense of the accepted derivation, he is acting with a feeling of impending danger; he is afraid something will happen to him if he does not act in exactly the right manner; with my (sic) definition or derivation he is getting as near as he can to doing something in a very careful and exact manner. This comes nearer to meaning what we mean it to mean, if you see what I mean!

One thing more: I have a theory, wholly insusceptible of proof, that Stevenson is responsible for the present vogue of the word. I saw the word for the first time in his yarn The Wrecker. I had never come across it before, though my reading had been fairly extensive. The story was published, as you may remember, in SCRIBNER'S, and in that form, and afterwards as the book, was undoubtedly widely read, as just at that time everyone was reading Stevenson. First one and then another of our budding authors saw the word and liked it, and its use spread by geometrical progression. It was all right for him to use it a single time, but alas! he didn't realize what sorrow he was entailing upon succeeding generations.

Meticulous as "timid" was used in the sixteenth century; as "overscrupulous" it first appears in the nineteenth.

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R. L. S. probably gave, or added, much to its vogue.

Miss Clearwater, of the F. Q. Club, speaking of the nomination of "somebody's else," says Wooley's "New Handbook of Composition," p. 267, declares both forms to be acceptable. Well, that sounds like the wild and wooley. "Somebody's else" is intolerable.

Miss Emily S. Steele, of Washington, writes about the little noun *ire*. She encloses in her letter Exhibits A, B, and C, "showing the torture inflicted on this poor substantive by the head-line writers of the Washington press" as follows:

Exhibit A
COMMITTEE IS IRED BY BLANTON TACTICS
(Washington *Times*, Jan. 16)

Exhibit B
BLANTON IRES COMMITTEE
(Washington *Times*, Jan. 16)

Exhibit C
IRED BY STORE DISPLAY
(Washington *Post*, Jan. 23)

The Pocket Paper-cutter. A short time ago Mr. H. I. Phillips, the brilliant and witty columnist of the New York *Sun*, described the agonies of a man cutting the leaves of a book with his hands and fingers. And now comes the following admirable suggestion from Richard K. Hawes, of Fall River, Mass.:

After much consideration, I submit that what this country needs is a reasonably priced pocket paper cutter. My wife was unable to find one for me at Christmas time, even in Boston. Yet a demand would certainly be found if the supply were adequate. This was the situation that made Henry Ford's fortune; given the supply, the demand will meet it.

The more I think upon the state of the Union, the more I am convinced that a good pocket paper cutter will create a revolution in our family life. There are men in my class who still read books. It is fair to assume that such men may be found among the alumni of every college. Many of these have occasion to cut the pages of a new book. Those who have never done so will be stimulated to attempt it by the beauty of the new paper cutter. Once the joys of cutting the pages of a new book have been tasted, I predict that men will stay home nights, the attendance at banquets will diminish, children will gather breathless about the head of the family, the radio will be silenced lest it interfere with the rhythm of the cutter, and perhaps an opportunity to restore the pleasures of reading aloud will once more be afforded.

Look upon the dark picture that is now before us. The head of the household slips into the living room or library quietly, with a package in hand. The mistress says, "What is that?" Evasively the answer is "Oh, something Mr. Lauriat (Brentano,) (Rosenbach) sent me." If this passes without comment, the head of the family sinks into his chair, adjusts the reading light, and remains motionless, to quiet his head.

Up to this moment all is well. But the H. O. F. now reaches for the table paper cutter. The proper phrase at this point is "Dammit, where's my paper cutter?" The response should be "Jack had it fixing his skates." On certain feast days, when the cook is out, the response may be, "I opened a can of crab meat with it." In either case, the joy of the thing has gone—the peace of the home destroyed. The H. O. F. must either find a ruined paper cutter, or procure a table knife from the pantry. Whatever is done, the tragedy is that he must arise from his chair. I have known divorces starting from less than this. Yea, much less.

Now if the H. O. F. had on his watch chain one of Phelps's Patented Pocket Paper cutters (note alliteration) the evening would proceed pleasantly until bed time. No restlessness would occur, no urge to leave the house to seek diversion.

George L. Fox, Yale '74, writes me about the word *snab*:

I am surprised that you did not know when you were in college (1883-87) the Yale slang word *snab* for pretty girl. It was very common in the 60s and 70s. I tested

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two or three '80 men on it, and they all knew it, except strange to say, Nod Osborn . . . my memory holds a striking instance of the popularity of the word at the Wooden Spoon Exhibition, July 30, 1868: the Latin Salutatory on that occasion was of course a parody of the regular Latin Salutatory. . . . The orator was a man of immense size and presence, W. S. Bissell of Buffalo, afterwards law partner of Cleveland and a member of his cabinet . . . he addressed the feminine portion of the audience somewhat as follows: "Mulieres, puellae, sorres, amicae . . . et *snabae*."

The Pioneer, a journal published in Allahabad, India, has in its issue for December 9, 1927, an interesting article by Frederic Whyte. He is commenting on the names included in the latest supplementary volume of the "Dictionary of National Biography," which contains the biographies of notable British subjects who died between the years 1912-21. Mr. Whyte asks this question: How many of these will be known to our great-grandchildren? Among the literary lights are Henry James, William De Morgan, Rupert Brooke, Stephen Phillips, Andrew Lang, Mrs. Humphry Ward, James Elroy Flecker, W. T. Stead. Mr. Whyte mentions a conversation he had with Lord Milner a few years ago, in which Lord Milner said that Stead was one of the ten most remarkable men he had ever met. On being asked for the other nine, the only man of letters he mentioned was Kipling; other notables were Gladstone, Chamberlain, Lord Roberts, Lord Kitchener, Lord Cromer, and Cecil Rhodes. I feel certain that Stead is not so well known in America as in Great Britain; I can hardly believe he is among the immortals. But William De Morgan?

It is certain that our younger generation are not reading the novels of William De Morgan; yet it seems equally certain that such novels cannot perish. "Joseph Vance" was published in 1906; the author was a man of sixty-five, with no popular reputation. His novel contained two hundred and eighty thousand words. He wrote it in longhand, and the MS. looked like a bale of cotton. It was of course refused by publishers. Then Mr. Lawrence, who said it was too long, but that he wished it were longer, took it to the enterprising publisher, the late William Heinemann, and said: "You have got to read it." Mr. Heinemann replied: "I'll be damned if I do!" But he did and published it, and it had an enormous sale.

Let me say now to old and young: if you are going on a long journey by land or sea, and want to carry one book that will capture and hold your interest for many hours, you cannot do better than to take "Joseph Vance." In spite of the fact that it is not now being read very generally, I believe it will never die.

Three centenaries are to be commemorated in 1928: the birth of Tolstoi, the birth of Ibsen, the death of Schubert.

For current announcements of the leading publishers see the front advertising section.

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Chardin and His Contribution to Painter's Painting

BY ROYAL CORTISSOZ

All great artists are great craftsmen, but some of them are detached from the rest through their peculiarly close alliance with their means of expression. Hence the critical isolation of "painter's painting," as a phenomenon in and by itself delightful. I remember the droll observation of an artist friend who had discovered that Fra Angelico "did not know how to paint." John La Farge chuckled derisively when I repeated it to him. He knew—none could know better—what mastery of painted surface went into the old Florentine's portrayal of a blue drapery against a white wall. But the modern iconoclast's remark was understandable. He was really thinking of the qualities set free when the Van Eycks turned from the egg medium of tempera, and, through the use of linseed-oil, opened the way for the development of modern technique. There is nothing lovelier in art than the even, delicate, decorative surface of an Italian Primitive, but the genius of oil-paint is another thing and has a glory of its own. The type dedicated to its integrity has, when it is authoritative, an absolutely singular accent. How personal are the effects of a Velasquez or a Manet, a Vermeer or an Alfred Stevens, a Frans Hals or a Frank Duveneck! But every one of these painters subscribes to the same fundamental principle, to that of the manipulation of pigment as a definitely absorbing exercise. It is a germinal type, this painter's painting, one especially appealing to the modern imagination, with its interest in method, and I love to dwell upon it. I love particularly to dwell upon Chardin, and I watch with intense interest for every sign of American appreciation of that eighteenth-century Frenchman.

Every occasion on which his tradition is affirmed here is, for me, a red-letter day. I rejoiced when the Wildenstein Gallery brought forward, a year or so ago, no fewer than nineteen of Chardin's works. I rejoiced again when the Frick Museum acquired La Serinette, a masterpiece, and whenever I get on the track of another Chardin in this or that collection, I feel specially rewarded. Only recently his spell has been revived in New York. Sir Robert Abdy, the English dealer, fetched over from Paris a marvellous version of La Bénédicité, one in which the familiar composition in the Louvre is extended to permit the entrance of another figure, on the left. Then Sir Joseph Duveen acquired Lord Leconfield's picture of La Mère Laborieuse, a jewel likewise known through a version in the Louvre. One does not talk of replicas where Chardin is concerned. He simply repeated himself and made each picture of his an original. There was nothing mechanical about his operations, either. An artist curious as to his color secrets asked him about them. "On se sert de couleurs," he replied, "on peint avec le

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sentiment." Patiently, slowly, with a warm and serene emotion, he developed his exquisite harmonies. A picture of his is an organic growth, a true work of creative art.

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One of the things contributing to make it unique, too, is his essential aloofness from the régime under which he made his way. Jean-Baptiste Siméon Chardin, son of the king's billiard-table maker, was born at Paris on November 2, 1699. He died a man of eighty. He was thus a lad at the time of the accession of Louis XV, and lived through the reign of that monarch's successor—lived long enough to touch hands with David, his complete antithesis. It was a tremendous span and it embraced the high tide of a movement which it would have seemed impossible for him to escape. The eighteenth century was a period compact of cynicism and artifice, light, ineffably graceful, governed by social conditions which were nothing if not tinctured by courtly taste. Chardin knew all about its charm. La Serinette is in the key of an urbane world. But that "sentiment" with which he painted had its origin in a totally different point of view. Of all the writers who have touched upon him, from Diderot down to the Goncourts, and M. Dayot in his magnificent folio, none has said anything truer than this sentence of Lady Dilke's: "He is not so much an eighteenth-century French artist, as a French artist of pure race and type." His roots strike deep. He is French in that he is sane, balanced, keeps his eye on the object, saturates his art in sincerity and truth. Fashion could not form him. The "fête champêtre" could not hold him. He was too simply human.

They say that he made the usual troubled start, his father looking to him for billiard-tables rather than pictures, but, as usual again, inborn instinct prevailed and he was soon busy in the atelier of one Pierre-Jacques Cazes, a painter once of some celebrity but long since forgotten. He found a better master in Noël-Nicolas Coypel, and had some experience under Van Loo when that artist was furbishing up Primaticcio's gallery at Fontainebleau. We hear of him as a member of the Academy of St. Luke, haven of artists who, according to Grimm, "had not enough of either talent or reputation to win entrance into the Royal Academy." But that did not long content him. All the biographers relate with relish the story of his invasion of the more august institution. He set ten little paintings of still life in an anteroom for the members to see as they passed in to one of their meetings, and the merits of these works seem to have excited universal approval. They were taken for the products "d'un bon peintre Flamand," and his début was secure. On September 27, 1725, being then in his twenty-sixth year, Chardin was cordially received into the Academy. He was identified with it all his life long, rising to official rank within its membership and ultimately dwelling in apartments in the Louvre. He was appointed "hanger" of the Salon. The king bought pictures from him. So did Frederick the Great. The Comte de Tessin in Sweden, presiding over the construction and embellishment of the royal palace at Stockholm, became the intermediary through whom the pictures by Chardin still in that country were purchased. Decidedly the master was successful—though it may be noted in passing that there was a curious disparity between his renown

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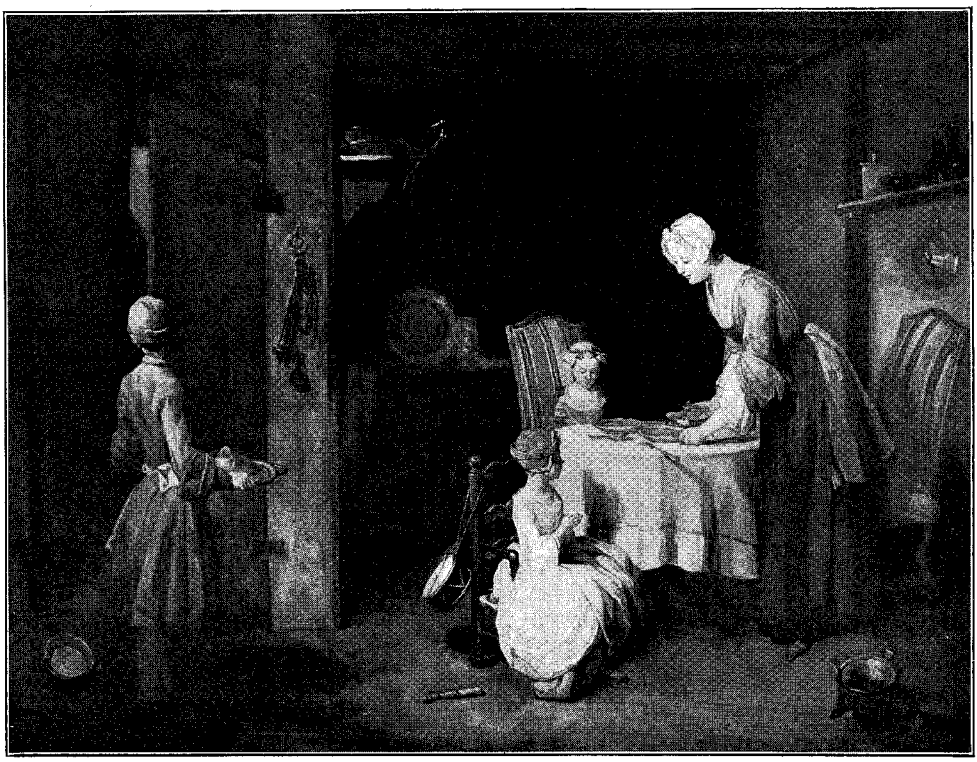
La Serinette.

From the painting by Chardin in the Frick Museum.

La Mère Laborieuse.

From the painting by Chardin shown at the Duveen Gallery.



Le Bénédicité.

From the painting by Chardin shown by Sir Robert Abdy.

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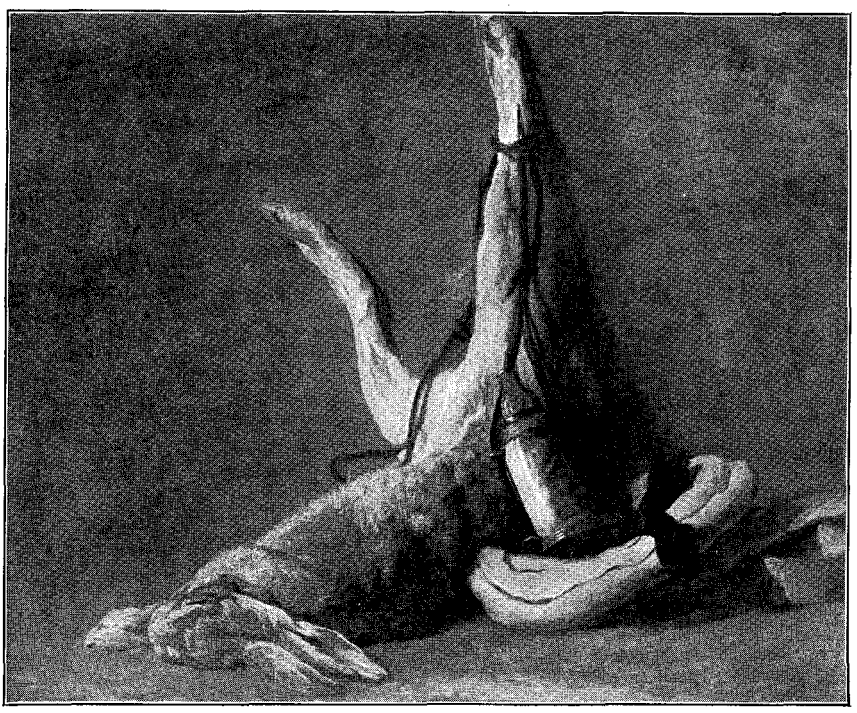
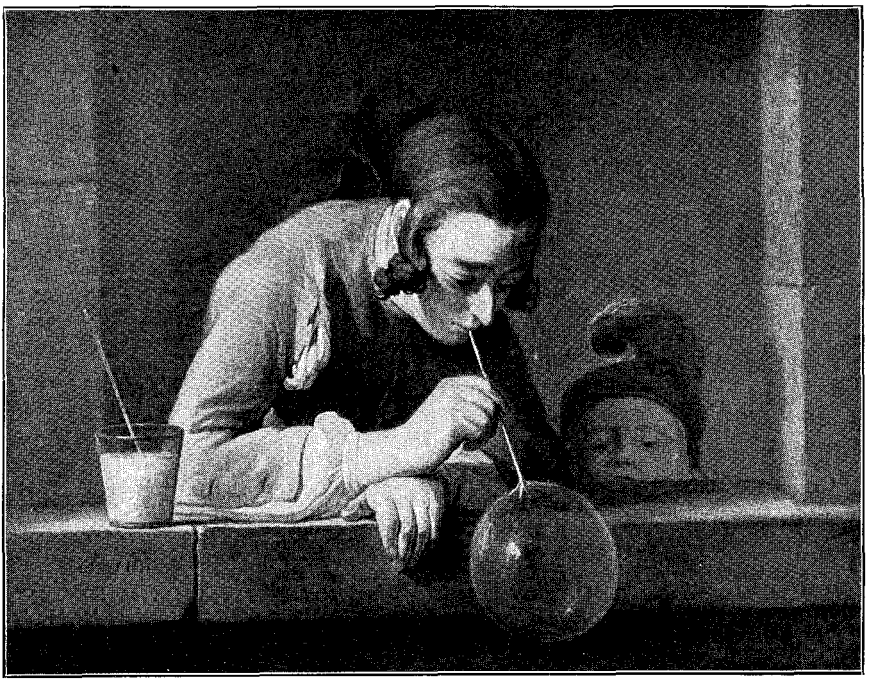


Le Lièvre.

From the painting by Chardin shown at the Wildenstein Gallery.



Les Bouteilles de Savon.

From the painting by Chardin shown at the Wildenstein Gallery.

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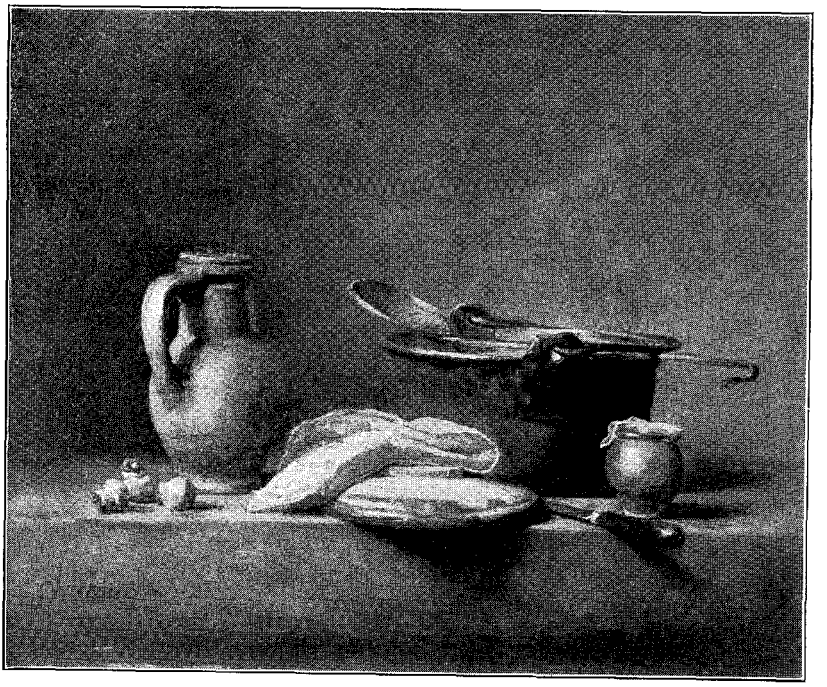
Le Jeune Homme au Violon.

From the painting by Chardin in the Louvre.



Nature Morte.

From the painting by Chardin shown at the Wildenstein Gallery.

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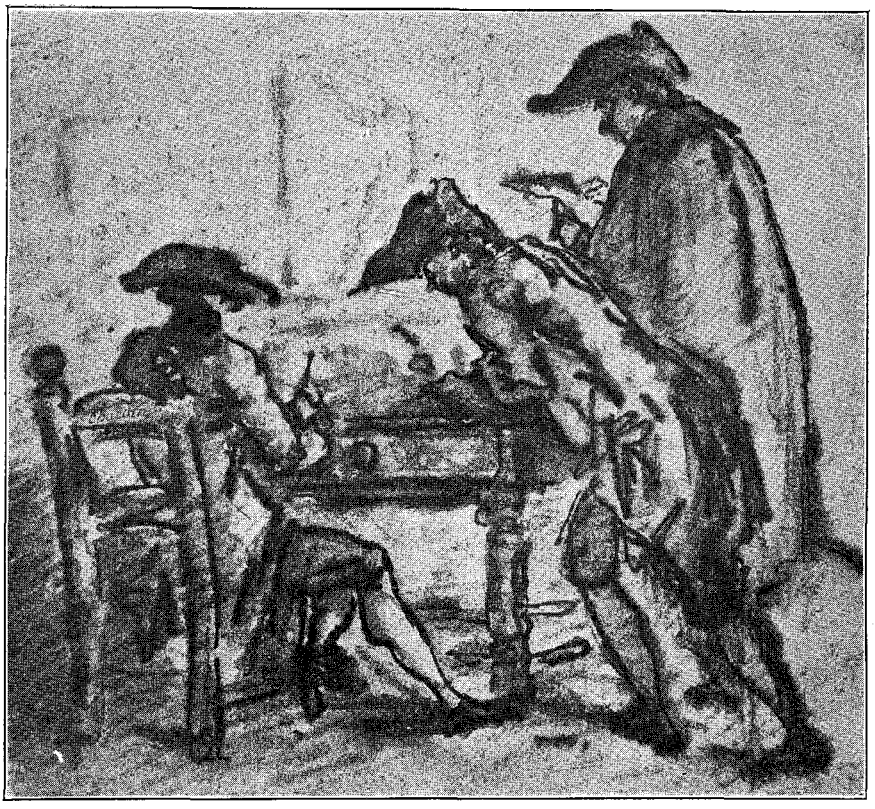

Reunion d'Amateurs.

From the drawing by Chardin.

L'Homme à la Boule.

From the sanguine by Chardin in the Louvre.

Étude.

From the drawing by Chardin.

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and his financial aggrandizement. Nominally, the Academy was a factor in his rise. But though he was in it he was not of it.

In the biography by Mr. Furst there is a confessedly fanciful but still very pretty picture of a quite possible scene. In it we are asked to watch "M. Chardin de l'Academie royale de peinture et sculpture dress in his best suit of clothes, see him put on a short wig . . . and go, on Sunday, the 17th of November, 1740, to Versailles, in order to be presented by M. le Contrôleur Général, to His Majesty, who had expressed the wish to see two of the painter's pictures, La Mère Laborieuse and La Bénédicité—both of which were examined by His Majesty and duly purchased." It is a picture legitimately to be kept in mind, for it is "in character," and supports the proper conception of Chardin as a representative figure in the eighteenth century, "arrived," officially recognized, a pillar of the epoch. But the bases of that pillar were in neither the boudoirs nor the drawing-rooms of the great—they were in the homes of the bourgeoisie and even in their kitchens.

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Criticism has always been a little at a loss as to the precise date of his first explorations of those more modest interiors. He began, as I have said, with still life. When did he think of tackling the figure? Lady Dilke, weighing the rather confused evidence, is inclined to doubt the theory of his having waited until he was nearly forty. I need not pursue that obscure phase of the subject here, merely saying that the hypothesis that he did not delay so long is confirmed by the works. They do not suggest a painter at any time hesitating about his *métier*. The same technical proficiency that gave the still-lifes to the world in such excellent form, so soon, must fairly early in the painter's career have been wreaked upon figure subjects. There are too many resemblances of style and facture and color for the two categories to be widely separated in point of time. In both fields you follow him accompanied by the echo of Diderot's exclamation on Chardin's art in the Salon of 1759: "It is always nature, always truth!" And, I would add, it is always beauty, the beauty of superlative *painting*.

The studies of still life perhaps most illuminatingly expose the fact, for in them the subject is so emphatically but a peg on which to hang the niceties of execution. Diderot, it is true, made much of the pure realism in them. "You could take the bottles by the neck if you were thirsty," he said. "The peaches and the grapes give you an appetite." Chardin himself was keen upon this veracity of his. One of the stories about him relates to his young days with Coypel, who asked him to paint in a gun in a hunting portrait. Chardin was deeply impressed by the solicitude his master showed for every point involved in the accurate representation of the weapon. I remember Le Lièvre in the Wildenstein exhibition aforementioned. Everything about that picture was amazingly exact, as exact as it would have been made by one of those Little Old Masters of the Dutch school whose influence upon Chardin is unmistakable. The hair was miraculously defined. The very deadness of the animal was somehow perfectly registered. But the picture also made me think of Velasquez and Vermeer in its sensuous beauty, in the brilliance with which insensate objects were metamor-

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phosed into so much heavenly painted surface. It was so whenever he touched still life, even when he went a little outside his accustomed sphere, and, increasing his scale and dipping into conventionalized composition, challenged Oudry. When he is satisfied with a casual theme, with fruit carelessly arranged, a loaf of bread, a bottle of wine, then he is in his own kingdom and brings off his *coup* with a conquering stroke indescribably exhilarating to the beholder.

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I love his still life "this side idolatry," but I confess that I am even happier when he widens his range and paints La Serinette, or La Toilette de Matin, or Les Bouteilles de Savon—when he paints women and children in the atmosphere of a domesticity that is merely adorable, or when he moves below to the scullery and paints La Fontaine or La Pourvoyeuse. Here the subject counts as it does not count in the world of still life, and it has, indeed, a rich historical significance. After the exclusively sophisticated and glittering pageant unrolled by Watteau, Lancret, Moreau, and the rest, it is well to forget its "silver flutes" and to foregather with the simpler denizens of eighteenth-century France, exchanging heartless wit for tender gentleness, a courtly carriage for the ordinary walk and demeanor of ordinary men, women, and children. The children particularly are enchanting images of a gracious and genuine life. It is a mistake to undervalue Chardin as the preserver of a social panorama. If he could afford to paint with "sentiment," we may surely afford to sympathize with what was humanly true in him, even with that which was, if you like, sentimental and anecdotic. His sweetness is "of the centre." It springs from the soul. It has the universality which belongs to great art. But it is Chardin's technique that finally validates it, his masterful grasp upon form, his sturdy brushwork, and, above all, his pure and delicately harmonized browns and grays, and supremely lovely whites. No one like Chardin for a perfect white, or gray, or rose! He culls his tints as though from flowers, yet he gives them body, splendid body, and leaves a canvas almost "fat."

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It is amusing to observe the gusto with which Diderot backed him up. Hogarth's rash assertion that "France hath not produced one remarkable good colorist," only drove Chardin's countryman to an outburst of pride in him. "This man," he said, "is the greatest colorist of the Salon, perhaps one of the greatest colorists in the whole realm of art. I cannot pardon that impudent Webb for having written a treatise on art without citing a single Frenchman. Neither can I pardon Hogarth for having said that the French school possessed not even a mediocre colorist. That is a lie, Monsieur Hogarth, that is ignorance or platitude on your part. . . . Paint better, if you can; learn how to draw, but stop writing. . . . For the last thirty years Chardin has been a great colorist."

He was a greater colorist than he was a draftsman. I do not think he was a particularly brilliant stylist in this field. There are only a few drawings recognized as his, and in those few the line seems to me rather that of a school than that of a sharply individualized master. In portraiture, too, the slender and often doubtfully authentic testimony that exists leaves him, as to drawing, a figure of his period, chiefly. But he

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drew with adequacy always, and he painted not for his period but for all time. There is something very wholesome about Chardin in substance, and he is equally honest, equally enduring, in form. He paints soundly, powerfully, beautifully. Painting humble motives having naught to do with the color and movement of the fashionable world upon which the art of his period was largely dependent, he imposed himself upon that world with an irresistible gesture. He could portray a kitchen-maid with the liveliest sympathy and yet remain one of the aristocrats of his school, with a hint of the grand style in his blood. And there is no old master more vitally modern, more eloquent in our day and generation of the everlasting virtues of painter's painting.

First and last the lesson he enforces is just the lesson of consummate workmanship, yet his paintings embody a trenchant rebuke for those artists who fancy that manual dexterity can be profitably exercised in a vacuum. As I have endeavored to show, a penetrating sympathy was inseparable from his genius. When he delineated a child building houses of cards or blowing soap-bubbles, he was truly interested in his subject. The levities of his time, so important to so many of his contemporaries, left him cold; but for life in homespun, so to say, he had a positively enkindled feeling. And then he saw it so beautifully! If he shared anything with those sparkling contemporaries of his, it was their clairvoyance for grace, their gift for endowing any figure with a certain suavely vivacious charm. Chardin is full of charm. His pictures take you captive through their technique and they stay in the mind with a reality that touches the heart. Never in their presence can we forget that if he painted with a brush and colors, he painted also, as he said, with "sentiment."

A calendar of current art exhibitions will be found in the Fifth Avenue Section.

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The Greene Murder Case

(Continued from page 448 of this number)

"I see your point," said Markham slowly. "But how does it help us? We know all the external facts; and they certainly don't fit into any intelligible conception of a unified whole."

"Not yet, perhaps," agreed Vance. "But that's because we haven't gone about it systematically. We've done too much investigating and too little thinking. We've been sidetracked by what the modern painters call documentation—that is, by the objective appeal of the picture's recognizable parts. We haven't sought for the abstract content. We've overlooked the 'significant form'—a loose phrase; but blame Clive Bell for it."*

"And how would you suggest that we set about determining the compositional design of this bloody canvas? We might dub the picture, by the way, 'Nepotism Gone Wrong.' " By this facetious remark, he was, I knew, attempting to counteract the serious impression the other's disquisition had made on him; for, though he realized Vance would not have drawn his voluminous parallel without a definite hope of applying it successfully to the problem in hand, he was chary of indulging any expectations lest they result in further disappointments.

In answer to Markham's question Vance drew out the sheaf of papers he had brought with him.

"Last night," he explained, "I set down briefly and chronologically all the outstanding facts of the Greene case—that is, I noted each important external factor of the ghastly picture we've been contemplating for the past few weeks. The principal forms are all here, though I may have left out many details. But I think I have tabulated a sufficient number of items to serve as a working basis."

He held out the papers to Markham.

"The truth lies somewhere in that list. If we could put the facts together—relate them to one another with their correct values—we'd know who was at the bottom of this orgy of crime; for, once we determined the pattern, each of the items would take on a vital significance, and we could read clearly the message they had to tell us."

Markham took the summary and, moving his chair nearer to the light, read through it without a word.

I preserved the original copy of the document; and, of all the records I possess, it was the most important and far-reaching in its effects. Indeed, it was the instrument by means of which the Greene case was solved. Had it not been for this recapitulation, prepared by Vance and later analyzed by him, the famous mass murder at the Greene mansion would doubtless have been relegated to the category of unsolved crimes.

Herewith is a verbatim reproduction of it:

GENERAL FACTS

1. An atmosphere of mutual hatred pervades the Greene mansion.

2. Mrs. Greene is a nagging, complaining paralytic, making life miserable for the whole household.

3. There are five children—two daughters, two sons, and one adopted daughter—who have nothing in common, and live in a state of constant antagonism and bitterness toward one another.

4. Though Mrs. Mannheim, the cook, was acquainted with Tobias Greene years ago and was remembered in his will, she refuses to reveal any of the facts in her past.

5. The will of Tobias Greene stipulated that the family must live in the Greene mansion for twenty-five years on pain of disinheritance, with the one exception that, if Ada should marry, she could establish a residence elsewhere, as she was not of the Greene blood. By the will Mrs. Greene has the handling and disposition of the money.

6. Mrs. Greene's will makes the five children equal beneficiaries. In event of death of any of them the survivors share alike; and if all should die the estate goes to their families.

7. The sleeping-rooms of the Greenes are arranged thus: Julia's and Rex's face each

* Vance was here referring to the chapter called "The Æsthetic Hypothesis" in Clive Bell's "Art." But, despite the somewhat slighting character of his remark, Vance was an admirer of Bell's criticisms, and had spoken to me with considerable enthusiasm of his "Since Cézanne"

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other at the front of the house; Chester's and Ada's face each other in the centre of the house; and Sibella's and Mrs. Greene's face each other at the rear. No two rooms intercommunicate, with the exception of Ada's and Mrs. Greene's; and these two rooms also give on the same balcony.

8. The library of Tobias Greene, which Mrs. Greene believes she had kept locked for twelve years, contains a remarkably complete collection of books on criminology and allied subjects.

9. Tobias Greene's past was somewhat mysterious, and there were many rumors concerning shady transactions carried on by him in foreign lands.

FIRST CRIME

10. Julia is killed by a contact shot, fired from the front, at 11.30 P. M.

11. Ada is shot from behind, also by a contact shot. She recovers.

12. Julia is found in bed, with a look of horror and amazement on her face.

13. Ada is found on the floor before the dressing-table.

14. The lights have been turned on in both rooms.

15. Over three minutes elapse between the two shots.

16. Von Blon, summoned immediately, arrives within half an hour.

17. A set of footprints, other than Von Blon's, leaving and approaching the house, is found; but the character of the snow renders them indecipherable.

18. The tracks have been made during the half-hour preceding the crime.

19. Both shootings are done with a .32 revolver.

20. Chester reports that an old .32 revolver of his is missing.

21. Chester is not satisfied with the police theory of a burglar, and insists that the District Attorney's office investigate the case.

22. Mrs. Greene is aroused by the shot fired in Ada's room, and hears Ada fall. But she hears no footsteps or sound of a door closing.

23. Sproot is half-way down the servants' stairs when the second shot is fired, yet he encounters no one in the hall. Nor does he hear any noise.

24. Rex, in the room next to Ada's, says he heard no shot.

25. Rex intimates that Chester knows more about the tragedy than he admits.

26. There is some secret between Chester and Sibella.

27. Sibella, like Chester, repudiates the burglar theory, but refuses to suggest an alternative, and says frankly that any member of the Greene family may be guilty.

28. Ada says she was awakened by a menacing presence in her room, which was in darkness; that she attempted to run from the intruder, but was pursued by shuffling footsteps.

29. Ada says a hand touched her when she first arose from bed, but refuses to make any attempt to identify the hand.

30. Sibella challenges Ada to say that it was she (Sibella) who was in the room, and then deliberately accuses Ada of having shot Julia. She also accuses Ada of having stolen the revolver from Chester's room.

31. Von Blon, by his attitude and manner, reveals a curious intimacy between Sibella and himself.

32. Ada is frankly fond of Von Blon.

SECOND CRIME

33. Four days after Julia and Ada are shot, at 11.30 P. M., Chester is murdered by a contact shot fired from a .32 revolver.

34. There is a look of amazement and horror on his face.

35. Sibella hears the shot and summons Sproot.

36. Sibella says she listened at her door immediately after the shot was fired, but heard no other sound.

37. The lights are on in Chester's room. He was apparently reading when the murderer entered.

38. A clear double set of footprints is found on the front walk. The tracks have been made within a half-hour of the crime.

39. A pair of galoshes, exactly corresponding to the footprints, is found in Chester's clothes-closet.

40. Ada had a premonition of Chester's death, and, when informed of it, guesses he has been shot in the same manner as Julia. But she is greatly relieved when shown the footprint patterns indicating that the murderer is an outsider.

41. Rex says he heard a noise in the hall and the sound of a door closing twenty minutes before the shot was fired.

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42. Ada, when told of Rex's story, recalls also having heard a door close at some time after eleven.

43. It is obvious that Ada knows or suspects something.

44. The cook becomes emotional at the thought of any one wanting to harm Ada, but says she can understand a person having a reason to shoot Julia and Chester.

45. Rex, when interviewed, shows clearly that he thinks some one in the house is guilty.

46. Rex accuses Von Blon of being the murderer.

47. Mrs. Greene makes a request that the investigation be dropped.

THIRD CRIME

48. Rex is shot in the forehead with a .32 revolver, at 11.20 A. M., twenty days after Chester has been killed and within five minutes of the time Ada phones him from the District Attorney's office.

49. There is no look of horror or surprise on Rex's face, as was the case with Julia and Chester.

50. His body is found on the floor before the mantel.

51. A diagram which Ada asked him to bring with him to the District Attorney's office has disappeared.

52. No one up-stairs hears the shot, though the doors are open; but Sproot, down-stairs in the butler's pantry, hears it distinctly.

53. Von Blon is visiting Sibella that morning; but she says she was in the bathroom bathing her dog at the time Rex was shot.

54. Footprints are found in Ada's room coming from the balcony door, which is ajar.

55. A single set of footprints is found leading from the front walk to the balcony.

56. The tracks could have been made at any time after nine o'clock that morning.

57. Sibella refuses to go away on a visit.

58. The galoshes that made all three sets of footprints are found in the linen-closet, although they were not there when the house was searched for the revolver.

59. The galoshes are returned to the linen-closet, but disappear that night.

FOURTH CRIME

60. Two days after Rex's death Ada and Mrs. Greene are poisoned within twelve hours of each other—Ada with morphine, Mrs. Greene with strychnine.

61. Ada is treated at once, and recovers.

62. Von Blon is seen leaving the house just before Ada swallows the poison.

63. Ada is discovered by Sproot as a result of Sibella's dog catching his teeth in the bell-cord.

64. The morphine was taken in the bouillon which Ada habitually drank in the mornings.

65. Ada states that no one visited her in her room after the nurse had called her to come and drink the bouillon; but that she went to Julia's room to get a shawl, leaving the bouillon unguarded for several moments.

66. Neither Ada nor the nurse remembers having seen Sibella's dog in the hall before the poisoned bouillon was taken.

67. Mrs. Greene is found dead of strychnine-poisoning the morning after Ada swallowed the morphine.

68. The strychnine could have been administered only after 11 P. M. the previous night.

69. The nurse was in her room on the third floor between 11 and 11.30 P. M.

70. Von Blon was calling on Sibella that night, but Sibella says he left her at 10.45.

71. The strychnine was administered in a dose of citrocarbonate, which, presumably, Mrs. Greene would not have taken without assistance.

72. Sibella decides to visit a girl chum in Atlantic City, and leaves New York on the afternoon train.

DISTRIBUTABLE FACTS

73. The same revolver is used on Julia, Ada, Chester, and Rex.

74. All three sets of footprints have obviously been made by some one in the house for the purpose of casting suspicion on an outsider.

75. The murderer is some one whom both Julia and Chester would receive in their rooms, in negligé, late at night.

76. The murderer does not make himself known to Ada, but enters her room surreptitiously.

77. Nearly three weeks after Chester's death Ada comes to the District Attorney's office, stating she has important news to impart.

78. Ada says that Rex has confessed to her

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that he heard the shot in her room and also heard other things, but was afraid to admit them; and she asks that Rex be questioned.

79. Ada tells of having found a cryptic diagram, marked with symbols, in the lower hall near the library door.

80. On the day of Rex's murder Von Blon reports that his medicine-case has been rifled of three grains of strychnine and six grains of morphine—presumably at the Greene mansion.

81. The library reveals the fact that some one has been in the habit of going there and reading by candle-light. The books that show signs of having been read are: a handbook of the criminal sciences, two works on toxicology, and two treatises on hysterical paralysis and sleep-walking.

82. The visitor to the library is some one who understands German well, for three of the books that have been read are in German.

83. The galoshes that disappeared from the linen-closet on the night of Rex's murder are found in the library.

84. Some one listens at the door while the library is being inspected.

85. Ada reports that she saw Mrs. Greene walking in the lower hall the night before.

86. Von Blon asserts that Mrs. Greene's paralysis is of a nature that makes movement a physical impossibility.

87. Arrangements are made with Von Blon to have Doctor Oppenheimer examine Mrs. Greene.

88. Von Blon informs Mrs. Greene of the proposed examination, which he has scheduled for the following day.

89. Mrs. Greene is poisoned before Doctor Oppenheimer's examination can be made.

90. The *post mortem* reveals conclusively that Mrs. Greene's leg muscles were so atrophied that she could not have walked.

91. Ada, when told of the autopsy, insists that she saw her mother's shawl about the figure in the hall, and, on being pressed, admits that Sibella sometimes wore it.

92. During the questioning of Ada regarding the shawl Mrs. Mannheim suggests that it was she herself whom Ada saw in the hall.

93. When Julia and Ada were shot there were, or could have been, present in the house: Chester, Sibella, Rex, Mrs. Greene, Von Blon, Barton, Hemming, Sproot, and Mrs. Mannheim.

94. When Chester was shot there were, or could have been, present in the house: Sibella, Rex, Mrs. Greene, Ada, Von Blon, Barton, Hemming, Sproot, and Mrs. Mannheim.

95. When Rex was shot there were, or could have been, present in the house: Sibella, Mrs. Greene, Von Blon, Hemming, Sproot, and Mrs. Mannheim.

96. When Ada was poisoned there were, or could have been, present in the house: Sibella, Mrs. Greene, Von Blon, Hemming, Sproot, and Mrs. Mannheim.

97. When Mrs. Greene was poisoned there were, or could have been, present in the house: Sibella, Von Blon, Ada, Hemming, Sproot, and Mrs. Mannheim.

When Markham had finished reading the summary, he went through it a second time. Then he laid it on the table.

"Yes, Vance," he said, "you've covered the main points pretty thoroughly. But I can't see any coherence in them. In fact, they seem only to emphasize the confusion of the case."

"And yet, Markham, I'm convinced that they only need rearrangement and interpretation to be perfectly clear. Properly analyzed, they'll tell us everything we want to know."

Markham glanced again through the pages.

"If it wasn't for certain items, we could make out a case against several people. But no matter what person in the list we may assume to be guilty, we are at once confronted by a group of contradictory and insurmountable facts. This *précis* could be used effectively to prove that every one concerned is innocent."

"Superficially it appears that way," agreed Vance. "But we first must find the generating line of the design, and then relate the subsidi'ry forms of the pattern to it."

Markham made a hopeless gesture.

"If only life were as simple as your æsthetic theories!"

"It's dashed simpler," Vance asserted. "The mere mechanism of a camera can record life; but only a highly developed creative intelligence, with a profound philosophic insight, can produce a work of art."

"Can *you* make any sense—æsthetic or otherwise—out of this?" Markham petulantly tapped the sheets of paper.

"I can see certain traceries, so to speak—certain suggestions of a pattern; but I'll admit the main design has thus far eluded me.

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The fact is, Markham, I have a feeling that some important factor in this case—some balancing line of the pattern, perhaps—is still hidden from us. I don't say that my résumé is insusceptible of interpretation in its present state; but our task would be greatly simplified if we were in possession of the missing integer."

Fifteen minutes later, when we had returned to Markham's main office, Swacker came in and laid a letter on the desk.

"There's a funny one, Chief," he said.

Markham took up the letter and read it with a deepening frown. When he had finished, he handed it to Vance. The letter-head read, "Rectory, Third Presbyterian Church, Stamford, Connecticut"; the date was the preceding day; and the signature was that of the Reverend Anthony Seymour. The contents of the letter, written in a small, precise hand, were as follows:

THE HONORABLE JOHN F.-X. MARKHAM,

Dear Sir: As far as I am aware, I have never betrayed a confidence. But there can arise, I believe, unforeseen circumstances to modify the strictness of one's adherence to a given promise, and indeed impose upon one a greater duty than that of keeping silent.

I have read in the papers of the wicked and abominable things that have happened at the Greene residence in New York; and I have therefore come to the conclusion, after much heart-searching and prayer, that it is my bounden duty to put you in possession of a fact which, as the result of a promise, I have kept to myself for over a year. I would not now betray this trust did I not believe that some good might possibly come of it, and that you, my dear sir, would also treat the matter in the most sacred confidence. It may not help you—indeed, I do not see how it can possibly lead to a solution of the terrible curse that has fallen upon the Greene family—but since the fact is connected intimately with one of the members of that family, I will feel better when I have communicated it to you.

On the night of August 29, of last year, a machine drove up to my door, and a man and a woman asked that I secretly marry them. I may say that I am frequently receiving such requests from runaway couples. This particular couple appeared to be well-bred dependable people, and I concurred with their wishes, giving them my assurances that the ceremony would, as they desired, be kept confidential.

The names that appeared on the license—which had been secured in New Haven late that afternoon—were Sibella Greene, of New York City, and Arthur Von Blon, also of New York City.

Vance read the letter and handed it back.

"Really, y' know, I can't say that I'm astonished——"

Suddenly he broke off, his eyes fixed thoughtfully before him. Then he rose nervously and paced up and down.

"That tears it!" he exclaimed.

Markham threw him a look of puzzled interrogation.

"What's the point?"

"Don't you see?" Vance came quickly to the District Attorney's desk. "My word! That's the one fact that's missing from my tabulation." He then unfolded the last sheet and wrote:

98. Sibella and Von Blon were secretly married a year ago.

"But I don't see how that helps," protested Markham.

"Neither do I at this moment," Vance replied. "But I'm going to spend this evening in erudite meditation."

XXIV

A MYSTERIOUS TRIP

(Sunday, December 5)

The Boston Symphony Orchestra was scheduled that afternoon to play a Bach Concerto and Beethoven's C-Minor Symphony; and Vance, on leaving the District Attorney's office, rode direct to Carnegie Hall. He sat through the concert in a state of relaxed receptivity, and afterward insisted on walking the two miles back to his quarters—an almost unheard-of thing for him.

Shortly after dinner Vance bade me good night and, donning his slippers and house-robe, went into the library. I had considerable work to do that night, and it was long past midnight when I finished. On the way to my room I passed the library door, which had been left slightly ajar, and I saw Vance sitting at his desk—his head in his hands, the summary lying before him—in an attitude of oblivious concentration. He was smoking, as

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was habitual with him during any sort of mental activity; and the ash-receiver at his elbow was filled with cigarette-stubs. I moved on quietly, marvelling at the way this new problem had taken hold of him.

It was half past three in the morning when I suddenly awoke, conscious of footsteps somewhere in the house. Rising quietly, I went into the hall, drawn by a vague curiosity mingled with uneasiness. At the end of the corridor a panel of light fell on the wall, and as I moved forward in the semidarkness I saw that the light issued from the partly open library door. At the same time I became aware that the footsteps, too, came from that room. I could not resist looking inside; and there I saw Vance walking up and down, his chin sunk on his breast, his hands crammed into the deep pockets of his dressing-gown. The room was dense with cigarette-smoke, and his figure appeared misty in the blue haze. I went back to bed and lay awake for an hour. When finally I dozed off it was to the accompaniment of those rhythmic footfalls in the library.

I rose at eight o'clock. It was a dark, dismal Sunday, and I had my coffee in the living-room by electric light. When I glanced into the library at nine Vance was still there, sitting at his desk. The reading-lamp was burning, but the fire on the hearth had died out. Returning to the living-room, I tried to interest myself in the Sunday newspapers; but after scanning the accounts of the Greene case I lit my pipe and drew up my chair before the grate.

It was nearly ten o'clock when Vance appeared at the door. All night he had been up, wrestling with his self-imposed problem; and the devitalizing effects of this long, sleepless concentration showed on him only too plainly. There were shadowed circles around his eyes; his mouth was drawn; and even his shoulders sagged wearily. But, despite the shock his appearance gave me, my dominant emotion was one of avid curiosity. I wanted to know the outcome of his all-night vigil; and as he came into the room I gave him a look of questioning expectancy.

When his eyes met mine he nodded slowly.

"I've traced the design," he said, holding out his hands to the warmth of the fire. "And it's more horrible than I even imagined." He was silent for some minutes. "Telephone Markham for me, will you, Van? Tell him I must see him at once. Ask him to come to breakfast. Explain that I'm a bit fagged."

He went out, and I heard him calling to Currie to prepare his bath.

I had no difficulty in inducing Markham to breakfast with us after I had explained the situation; and in less than an hour he arrived. Vance was dressed and shaved, and looked considerably fresher than when I had first seen him that morning; but he was still pale, and his eyes were fatigued.

No mention was made of the Greene case during breakfast, but when we had sought easy chairs in the library, Markham could withhold his impatience no longer.

"Van intimated over the phone that you had made something out of the summary."

"Yes." Vance spoke dispiritedly. "I've fitted all the items together. And it's damnable! No wonder the truth escaped us."

Markham leaned forward, his face tense, unbelieving.

"You know the truth?"

"Yes, I know," came the quiet answer. "That is, my brain has told me conclusively who's at the bottom of this fiendish affair; but even now—in the daylight—I can't credit it. Everything in me revolts against the acceptance of the truth. The fact is, I'm almost afraid to accept it. . . . Dash it all, I'm getting mellow. Middle-age has crept upon me." He attempted to smile, but failed.

Markham waited in silence.

"No, old man," continued Vance; "I'm not going to tell you now. I can't tell you until I've looked into one or two matters. You see, the pattern is plain enough, but the recognizable objects, set in their new relationships, are grotesque—like the shapes in an awful dream. I must first touch them and measure them to make sure that they're not, after all, mere abortive vagaries."

"And how long will this verification take?" Markham knew there was no use to try to force the issue. He realized that Vance was fully conscious of the seriousness of the situation, and respected his decision to investigate certain points before revealing his conclusions.

"Not long, I hope." Vance went to his desk and wrote something on a piece of paper, which he handed to Markham. "Here's a list of the five books in Tobias's library that showed signs of having been read by the nocturnal visitor. I want those books, Markham

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—immediately. But I don't want any one to know about their being taken away. Therefore, I'm going to ask you to phone Nurse O'Brien to get Mrs. Greene's key and secure them when no one is looking. Tell her to wrap them up and give them to the detective on guard in the house with instructions to bring them here. You can explain to her what section of the book-shelves they're in."

Markham took the paper and rose without a word. At the door of the den, however, he paused.

"Do you think it wise for the man to leave the house?"

"It won't matter," Vance told him. "Nothing more can happen there at present."

Markham went on into the den. In a few minutes he returned.

"The books will be here in half an hour."

When the detective arrived with the package Vance unwrapped it and laid the volumes beside his chair.

"Now, Markham, I'm going to do some reading. You won't mind, what?" Despite his casual tone, it was evident that an urgent seriousness underlay his words.

Markham got up immediately; and again I marvelled at the complete understanding that existed between these two disparate men.

"I have a number of personal letters to write," he said, "so I'll run along. Currie's omelet was excellent.—When shall I see you again? I could drop round at tea-time."

Vance held out his hand with a look bordering on affection.

"Make it five o'clock. I'll be through with my perusings by then. And thanks for your tolerance." Then he added gravely: "You'll understand, after I've told you everything, why I wanted to wait a bit."

When Markham returned that afternoon a little before five Vance was still reading in the library; but shortly afterward he joined us in the living-room.

"The picture clarifies," he said. "The fantastic images are gradually taking on the aspect of hideous realities. I've substantiated several points, but a few facts still need corroboration."

"To vindicate your hypothesis?"

"No, not that. The hypothesis is self-proving. There's no doubt as to the truth. But—dash it all, Markham!—I refuse to accept it until every scrap of evidence has been incontestably sustained."

"Is the evidence of such a nature that I can use it in a court of law?"

"That is something I refuse even to consider. Criminal proceedings seem utterly irrelevant in the present case. But I suppose society must have its pound of flesh, and you—the duly elected Shylock of God's great common people—will no doubt wield the knife. However, I assure you I shall not be present at the butchery."

Markham studied him curiously.

"Your words sound rather ominous. But if, as you say, you have discovered the perpetrator of these crimes, why shouldn't society exact punishment?"

"If society were omniscient, Markham, it would have a right to sit in judgment. But society is ignorant and venomous, devoid of any trace of insight or understanding. It exalts knavery, and worships stupidity. It crucifies the intelligent, and puts the diseased in dungeons. And, withal, it arrogates to itself the right and ability to analyze the subtle sources of what it calls 'crime,' and to condemn to death all persons whose inborn and irresistible impulses it does not like. That's your sweet society, Markham—a pack of wolves watering at the mouth for victims on whom to vent its organized lust to kill and flay."

Markham regarded him with some astonishment and considerable concern.

"Perhaps you are preparing to let the criminal escape in the present case," he said with the irony of resentment.

"Oh, no," Vance assured him. "I shall turn your victim over to you. The Greene murderer is of a particularly vicious type, and should be rendered impotent. I was merely trying to suggest that the electric chair—that touchin' device of your beloved society—is not quite the correct method of dealing with this culprit."

"You admit, however, that he is a menace to society."

"Undoubtedly. And the hideous thing about it is that this tournament of crime at the Greene mansion will continue unless we can put a stop to it. That's why I am being so careful. As the case now stands, I doubt if you could even make an arrest."

When tea was over Vance got up and stretched himself.

"By the by, Markham," he said offhandedly, "have you received any report on Sibella's activities?"

"Nothing important. She's still in Atlantic

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City, and evidently intends to stay there for some time. She phoned Sproot yesterday to send down another trunkful of her clothes."

"Did she, now? That's very gratifyin'." Vance walked to the door with sudden resolution. "I think I'll run out to the Greenes' for a little while. I sha'n't be gone over an hour. Wait for me here, Markham—there's a good fellow; I don't want my visit to have an official flavor. There's a new *Simplicissimus* on the table to amuse you till I return. Con it and thank your own special gods that you have no Thöny or Gulbranssen in this country to caricature your Gladstonian features."

As he spoke he beckoned to me, and, before Markham could question him, we passed out into the hall and down the stairs. Fifteen minutes later a taxicab set us down before the Greene mansion.

Sproot opened the door for us, and Vance, with only a curt greeting, led him into the drawing-room.

"I understand," he said, "that Miss Sibella phoned you yesterday from Atlantic City and asked to have a trunk shipped to her."

Sproot bowed. "Yes, sir. I sent the trunk off last night."

"What did Miss Sibella say to you over the phone?"

"Very little, sir—the connection was not good. She said merely that she had no intention of returning to New York for a considerable time and needed more clothes than she had taken with her."

"Did she ask how things were going at the house here?"

"Only in the most casual way, sir."

"Then she didn't seem apprehensive about what might happen here while she was away?"

"No, sir. In fact—if I may say so without disloyalty—her tone of voice was quite indifferent, sir."

"Judging from her remarks about the trunk, how long would you say she intends to be away?"

Sproot considered the matter.

"That's difficult to say, sir. But I would go so far as to venture the opinion that Miss Sibella intends to remain in Atlantic City for a month or more."

Vance nodded with satisfaction.

"And now, Sproot," he said, "I have a particularly important question to ask you. When you first went into Miss Ada's room on the night she was shot and found her on the floor before the dressing-table, was the window open? Think! I want a positive answer. You know the window is just beside the dressing-table and overlooks the steps leading to the stone balcony. *Was it open or shut?*"

Sproot contracted his brows and appeared to be recalling the scene. Finally he spoke, and there was no doubt in his voice.

"The window was open, sir. I recall it now quite distinctly. After Mr. Chester and I had lifted Miss Ada to the bed, I closed it at once for fear she would catch cold."

"How far open was the window?" asked Vance with eager impatience.

"Eight or nine inches, sir, I should say. Perhaps a foot."

"Thank you, Sproot. That will be all. Now please tell the cook I want to see her."

Mrs. Mannheim came in a few minutes later, and Vance indicated a chair near the desk-light. When the woman had seated herself he stood before her and fixed her with a stern, implacable gaze.

"Frau Mannheim, the time for truth-telling has come. I am here to ask you a few questions, and unless I receive a straight answer to them I shall report you to the police. You will, I assure you, receive no consideration at their hands."

The woman tightened her lips stubbornly and shifted her eyes, unable to meet Vance's penetrating stare.

"You told me once that your husband died in New Orleans thirteen years ago. Is that correct?"

Vance's question seemed to relieve her mind, and she answered readily.

"Yes, yes. Thirteen years ago."

"What month?"

"In October."

"Had he been ill long?"

"About a year."

"What was the nature of his illness?"

Now a look of fright came into her eyes.

"I—don't know—exactly," she stammered. "The doctors didn't let me see him."

"He was in a hospital?"

She nodded several times rapidly. "Yes—a hospital."

"And I believe you told me, Frau Mannheim, that you saw Mr. Tobias Greene a year before your husband's death. That would have been about the time your husband entered the hospital—fourteen years ago."

She looked vaguely at Vance, but made no reply.

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"And it was exactly fourteen years ago that Mr. Greene adopted Ada."

The woman caught her breath sharply. A look of panic contorted her face.

"So when your husband died," continued Vance, "you came to Mr. Greene, knowing he would give you a position."

He went up to her and touched her filially on the shoulder.

"I have suspected for some time, Frau Mannheim," he said kindly, "that Ada is your daughter. It's true, isn't it?"

With a convulsive sob the woman hid her face in her apron.

"I gave Mr. Greene my word," she confessed brokenly, "that I wouldn't tell any one—not even Ada—if he let me stay here—to be near her."

"You haven't told any one," Vance consoled her. "It was not your fault that I guessed it."

When Mrs. Mannheim left us a little later Vance had succeeded in allaying her apprehension and distress. He then sent for Ada.

As she entered the drawing-room the troubled look in her eyes and the pallor of her cheeks told clearly of the strain she was under. Her first question voiced the fear uppermost in her mind.

"Have you found out anything, Mr. Vance?" She spoke with an air of pitiful discouragement. "It's terrible alone here in this big house—especially at night. Every sound I hear . . ."

"You mustn't let your imagination get the better of you, Ada," Vance counselled her. Then he added: "We know a lot more now than we did, and before long, I hope, all your fears will be done away with. In fact, it's in regard to what we've found out that I've come here to-day. I thought perhaps you could help me again."

"If only I could! But I've thought and thought. . . ."

Vance smiled.

"Let us do the thinking, Ada.—What I wanted to ask you is this: do you know if Sibella speaks German well?"

The girl appeared surprised.

"Why, yes. And so did Julia and Chester and Rex. Father insisted on their learning it. And he spoke it too—almost as well as he spoke English. As for Sibella, I've often heard her and Doctor Von talking in German."

"But she spoke with an accent, I suppose."

"A slight accent—she'd never been long in Germany. But she spoke very well German."

"That's what I wanted to be sure of."

"Then you do know something!" Her voice quavered with eagerness. "Oh, how long before this awful suspense will be over? Every night for weeks I've been afraid to turn out my lights and go to sleep."

"You needn't be afraid to turn out your lights now," Vance assured her. "There won't be any more attempts on your life, Ada."

She looked at him for a moment searchingly, and something in his manner seemed to hearten her. When we took our leave the color had come back to her cheeks.

Markham was pacing the library restlessly when we arrived home.

"I've checked several more points," Vance announced. "But I've missed the important one—the one that would explain the unbelievable hideousness of the thing I've unearthed."

He went directly into the den, and we could hear him telephoning. Returning a few minutes later, he looked anxiously at his watch. Then he rang for Currie and ordered his bag packed for a week's trip.

"I'm going away, Markham," he said. "I'm going to travel—they say it broadens the mind. My train departs in less than an hour; and I'll be away a week. Can you bear to be without me for so long? However, nothing will happen in connection with the Greene case during my absence. In fact, I'd advise you to shelve it temporarily."

He would say no more, and in half an hour he was ready to go.

"There's one thing you can do for me while I'm away," he told Markham, as he slipped into his overcoat. "Please have drawn up for me a complete and detailed weather report from the day preceding Julia's death to the day following Rex's murder."

He would not let either Markham or me accompany him to the station, and we were left in ignorance of even the direction in which his mysterious trip was to take him.

XXV

THE CAPTURE

(Monday, December 13; 4 p. m.)

It was eight days before Vance returned to New York. He arrived on the afternoon of Monday, December 13, and after he had

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had his tub and changed his clothes, he telephoned Markham to expect him in half an hour. He then ordered his Hispano-Suiza from the garage; and by this sign I knew he was under a nervous strain. In fact, he had spoken scarcely a dozen words to me since his return, and as he picked his way down-town through the late afternoon traffic he was gloomy and preoccupied. Once I ventured to ask him if his trip had been successful, and he had merely nodded. But when we turned into Centre Street he relented a little, and said:

"There was never any doubt as to the success of my trip, Van. I knew what I'd find. But I didn't dare trust my reason; I had to see the records with my own eyes before I'd capitulate unreservedly to the conclusion I'd formed."

Both Markham and Heath were waiting for us in the District Attorney's office. It was just four o'clock, and the sun had already dropped below the New York Life Building which towered above the old Criminal Courts structure a block to the southwest.

"I took it for granted you had something important to tell me," said Markham; "so I asked the Sergeant to come here."

"Yes, I've much to tell." Vance had thrown himself into a chair, and was lighting a cigarette. "But first I want to know if anything has happened in my absence."

"Nothing. Your prognostication was quite accurate. Things have been quiet and apparently normal at the Greene mansion."

"Anyhow," interposed Heath, "we may have a little better chance this week of getting hold of something to work on. Sibella returned from Atlantic City yesterday, and Von Blon's been hanging round the house ever since."

"Sibella back?" Vance sat up, and his eyes became intent.

"At six o'clock yesterday evening," said Markham. "The newspaper men at the beach ferreted her out and ran a sensational story about her. After that the poor girl didn't have an hour's peace; so yesterday she packed up and came back. We got word of the move through the men the Sergeant had set to watch her. I ran out to see her this morning, and advised her to go away again. But she was pretty thoroughly disgusted, and stubbornly refused to quit the Greene house—said death was preferable to being hounded by reporters and scandal-mongers."

Vance had risen and moved to the window, where he stood scanning the gray sky-line.

"Sibella's back, eh?" he murmured. Then he turned round. "Let me see that weather report I asked you to prepare for me."

Markham reached into a drawer and handed him a typewritten sheet of paper.

After perusing it he tossed it back on the desk.

"Keep that, Markham. You'll need it when you face your twelve good men and true."

"What is it you have to tell us, Mr. Vance?" The Sergeant's voice was impatient despite his effort to control it. "Mr. Markham said you had a line on the case.—For God's sake, sir, if you've got any evidence against any one, slip it to me and let me make an arrest. I'm getting thin worrying over this damn business."

Vance drew himself together.

"Yes, I know who the murderer is, Sergeant; and I have the evidence—though it wasn't my plan to tell you just yet. However"—he went to the door with grim resolution—"we can't delay matters any longer now. Our hand has been forced.—Get into your coat, Sergeant—and you, too, Markham. We'd better get out to the Greene house before dark."

"But, damn it all, Vance!" Markham expostulated. "Why don't you tell us what's in your mind?"

"I can't explain now—you'll understand why later——"

"If you know so much, Mr. Vance," broke in Heath, "what's keeping us from making an arrest?"

"You're going to make your arrest, Sergeant—inside of an hour." Though he gave the promise without enthusiasm, it acted electrically on both Heath and Markham.

Five minutes later the four of us were driving up West Broadway in Vance's car.

Sproot as usual admitted us without the faintest show of interest, and stood aside respectfully for us to enter.

"We wish to see Miss Sibella," said Vance. "Please tell her to come to the drawing-room—alone."

"I'm sorry, sir, but Miss Sibella is out."

"Then tell Miss Ada we want to see her."

"Miss Ada is out also, sir." The butler's unemotional tone sounded strangely incon-

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gruous in the tense atmosphere we had brought with us.

"When do you expect them back?"

"I couldn't say, sir. They went out motoring together. They probably won't be gone long. Would you gentlemen care to wait?"

Vance hesitated.

"Yes, we'll wait," he decided, and walked toward the drawing-room.

But he had barely reached the archway when he turned suddenly and called to Sproot, who was retreating slowly toward the rear of the hall.

"You say Miss Sibella and Miss Ada went motoring together? How long ago?"

"About fifteen minutes—maybe twenty, sir." A barely perceptible lift of the man's eyebrows indicated that he was greatly astonished by Vance's sudden change of manner.

"Whose car did they go in?"

"In Doctor Von Blon's. He was here to tea——"

"And who suggested the ride, Sproot?"

"I really couldn't say, sir. They were sort of debating about it when I came in to clear away the tea things."

"Repeat everything you heard!" Vance spoke rapidly and with more than a trace of excitement.

"When I entered the room the doctor was saying as how he thought it would be a good thing for the young ladies to get some fresh air; and Miss Sibella said she'd had enough fresh air."

"And Miss Ada?"

"I don't remember her saying anything, sir."

"And they went out to the car while you were here?"

"Yes, sir. I opened the door for them."

"And did Doctor Von Blon go in the car with them?"

"Yes. But I believe they were to drop him at Mrs. Riglander's, where he had a professional call to make. From what he said as he went out I gathered that the young ladies were then to take a drive, and that he was to call here for the car after dinner."

"What!" Vance stiffened, and his eyes burned upon the old butler. "Quick, Sproot! Do you know where Mrs. Riglander lives?"

"On Madison Avenue in the Sixties, I believe."

"Get her on the phone—find out if the doctor has arrived."

I could not help marvelling at the impassive way in which the man went to the telephone to comply with this astonishing and seemingly incomprehensible request. When he returned his face was expressionless.

"The doctor has not arrived at Mrs. Riglander's, sir," he reported.

"He's certainly had time," Vance commented, half to himself. Then: "Who drove the car when it left here, Sproot?"

"I couldn't say for certain, sir. I didn't notice particularly. But it's my impression that Miss Sibella entered the car first as though she intended to drive——"

"Come, Markham!" Vance started for the door. "I don't like this at all. There's a mad idea in my head. . . . Hurry, man! If something devilish should happen . . ."

We had reached the car, and Vance sprang to the wheel. Heath and Markham, in a daze of incomprehension but swept along by the other's ominous insistence, took their places in the tonneau; and I sat beside the driver's seat.

"We're going to break all the traffic and speed regulations, Sergeant," Vance announced, as he manœuvred the car in the narrow street; "so have your badge and credentials handy. I may be taking you chaps on a wild-goose chase, but we've got to risk it."

We darted toward First Avenue, cut the corner short, and turned up-town. At 59th Street we swung west and went toward Columbus Circle. A surface car held us up at Lexington Avenue; and at Fifth Avenue we were stopped by a traffic officer. But Heath showed his card and spoke a few words, and we struck across Central Park. Swinging perilously round the curves of the driveways, we came out into 81st Street and headed for Riverside Drive. There was less congestion here, and we made between forty and fifty miles an hour all the way to Dyckman Street.

It was a nerve-racking ordeal, for not only had the shadows of evening fallen, but the streets were slippery in places where the melted snow had frozen in large sheets along the sloping sides of the Drive. Vance, however, was an excellent driver. For two years he had driven the same car, and he understood thoroughly how to handle it. Once we skidded drunkenly, but he managed to right the traction before the rear wheels came in contact with the high curbing. He kept the siren horn

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screeching constantly, and other cars drew away from us, giving us a fairly clear road.

At several street intersections we had to slow down; and twice we were halted by traffic officers, but were permitted to proceed the moment the occupants of the tonneau were recognized. On North Broadway we were forced to the curb by a motorcycle policeman, who showered us with a stream of picturesque abuse. But when Heath had cut him short with still more colorful vituperation, and he had made out Markham's features in the shadows, he became ludicrously humble, and acted as an advance-guard for us all the way to Yonkers, clearing the road and holding up traffic at every cross-street.

At the railroad tracks near Yonkers Ferry we were obliged to wait several minutes for the shunting of some freight-cars, and Markham took this opportunity of venting his emotions.

"I presume you have a good reason for this insane ride, Vance," he said angrily. "But since I'm taking my life in my hands by accompanying you, I'd like to know what your objective is."

"There's no time now for explanations," Vance replied brusquely. "Either I'm on a fool's errand, or there's an abominable tragedy ahead of us." His face was set and white, and he looked anxiously at his watch. "We're twenty minutes ahead of the usual running time from the Plaza to Yonkers. Furthermore, we're taking the direct route to our destination—another ten minutes' saving. If the thing I fear is scheduled for to-night, the other car will go by the Spuyten Duyvil Road and through the back lanes along the river——"

At this moment the crossing-bars were lifted, and our car jerked forward, picking up speed with breathless rapidity.

Vance's words had set a train of thought going in my mind. The Spuyten Duyvil Road—the back lanes along the river. . . . Suddenly there flashed on my brain a memory of that other ride we had taken weeks before with Sibella and Ada and Von Blon; and a sense of something inimical and indescribably horrifying took possession of me. I tried to recall the details of that ride—how we had turned off the main road at Dyckman Street, skirted the palisades through old wooded estates, traversed private hedge-lined roadways, entered Yonkers from the Riverdale Road, turned again from the main highway past the Ardsley Country Club, taken the little-used road along the river toward Tarrytown, and stopped on the high cliff to get a panoramic view of the Hudson. . . . That cliff overlooking the waters of the river!—Ah, now I remembered Sibella's cruel jest—her supposedly satirical suggestion of how a perfect murder might be committed there. And on the instant of that recollection I knew where Vance was heading—I understood the thing he feared! He believed that another car was also heading for that lonely precipice beyond Ardsley—a car that had nearly half an hour start. . . .

We were now below the Longue Vue hill, and a few moments later we swung into the Hudson Road. At Dobbs Ferry another officer stepped in our path and waved frantically; but Heath, leaning over the running-board, shouted some unintelligible words, and Vance, without slackening speed, skirted the officer and plunged ahead toward Ardsley.

Ever since we had passed Yonkers, Vance had been inspecting every large car along the way. He was, I knew, looking for Von Blon's low-hung yellow Daimler. But there had been no sign of it, and, as he threw on the brakes preparatory to turning into the narrow road by the Country Club golf-links, I heard him mutter half-aloud:

"God help us if we're too late!"*

We made the turn at the Ardsley station at such a rate of speed that I held my breath for fear we would upset; and I had to grip the seat with both hands to keep my balance as we jolted over the rough road along the river level. We took the hill before us in high gear, and climbed swiftly to the dirt roadway along the edge of the bluff beyond.

Scarcely had we rounded the hill's crest when an exclamation broke from Vance, and simultaneously I noticed a flickering red light bobbing in the distance. A new spurt of speed brought us perceptibly nearer to the car before us, and it was but a few moments before we could make out its lines and color. There was no mistaking Von Blon's great Daimler.

"Hide your faces," Vance shouted over his shoulder to Markham and Heath. "Don't let any one see you as we pass the car ahead."

I leaned over below the panel of the front door, and a few seconds later a sudden swerve

* This was the first and only time during my entire friendship with Vance that I ever heard him use a Scriptural expletive.

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told me that we were circling about the Daimler. The next moment we were back in the road, rushing forward in the lead.

Half a mile further on the road narrowed. There was a deep ditch on one side and dense shrubbery on the other. Vance quickly threw on the brakes, and our rear wheels skidded on the hard frozen earth, bringing us to a halt with our car turned almost at right angles with the road, completely blocking the way.

"Out, you chaps!" called Vance.

We had no more than alighted when the other car drove up and, with a grinding of brakes, came to a lurching halt within a few feet of our machine. Vance had run back, and as the car reached a standstill he threw open the front door. The rest of us had instinctively crowded after him, urged forward by some undefined sense of excitement and dread foreboding. The Daimler was of the sedan type with small high windows, and even with the lingering radiance of the western sky and the dashboard illumination I could barely make out the figures inside. But at that moment Heath's pocket flash-light blazed in the semidarkness.

The sight that met my straining eyes was paralyzing. During the drive I had speculated on the outcome of our tragic adventure, and I had pictured several hateful possibilities. But I was wholly unprepared for the revelation that confronted me.

The tonneau of the car was empty; and, contrary to my suspicions, there was no sign of Von Blon. In the front seat were the two girls. Sibella was on the further side, slumped down in the corner, her head hanging forward. On her temple was an ugly cut, and a stream of blood ran down her cheek. At the wheel sat Ada, glowering at us with cold ferocity. Heath's flash-light fell directly on her face, and at first she did not recognize us. But as her pupils became adjusted to the glare her gaze concentrated on Vance, and a foul epithet burst from her.

Simultaneously her right hand dropped from the wheel to the seat beside her, and when she raised it again it held a small glittering revolver. There was a flash of flame and a sharp report, followed by a shattering of glass where the bullet had struck the windshield. Vance had been standing with one foot on the running-board leaning into the car, and, as Ada's arm came up with the revolver, he had snatched her wrist and held it.

"No, my dear," came his drawling voice, strangely calm and without animosity; "you sha'n't add me to your list. I was rather expecting that move, don't y' know."

Ada, frustrated in her attempt to shoot him, hurled herself upon him with savage fury. Vile abuse and unbelievable blasphemies poured from her snarling lips. Her wrath, feral and rampant, utterly possessed her. She was like a wild animal, cornered and conscious of defeat, yet fighting with a last instinct of hopeless desperation. Vance, however, had secured both her wrists, and could have broken her arms with a single twist of his hands; but he treated her almost tenderly, like a father subduing an infuriated child. Stepping back quickly he drew her into the roadway, where she continued her struggles with renewed violence.

"Come, Sergeant!" Vance spoke with weary exasperation. "You'd better put handcuffs on her. I don't want to hurt her."

Heath had stood watching the amazing drama in a state of bewilderment, apparently too nonplussed to move. But Vance's voice awakened him to sharp activity. There were two metallic clicks, and Ada suddenly relaxed into a listless attitude of sullen tractability. She leaned panting against the side of the car as if too weak to stand alone.

Vance bent over and picked up the revolver which had fallen to the road. With a cursory glance at it he handed it to Markham.

"There's Chester's gun," he said. Then he indicated Ada with a pitying movement of the head. "Take her to your office, Markham —Van will drive the car. I'll join you there as soon as I can. I must get Sibella to a hospital."

He stepped briskly into the Daimler. There was a shifting of gears, and with a few deft manipulations he reversed the car in the narrow road.

"And watch her, Sergeant!" he flung back, as the car darted away toward Ardsley.

I drove Vance's car back to the city. Markham and Heath sat in the rear seat with the girl between them. Hardly a word was spoken during the entire hour-and-a-half's ride. Several times I glanced behind me at the silent trio. Markham and the Sergeant appeared completely stunned by the surprising truth that had just been revealed to them. Ada, huddled between them, sat apathetically with closed eyes, her head forward. Once I noticed

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that she pressed a handkerchief to her face with her manacled hands; and I thought I heard the sound of smothered sobbing. But I was too nervous to pay any attention. It took every effort of my will to keep my mind on my driving.

As I drew up before the Franklin Street entrance of the Criminal Courts Building and was about to shut off the engine, a startled exclamation from Heath caused me to release the switch.

"Holy Mother o' God!" I heard him say in a hoarse voice. Then he thumped me on the back. "Get to the Beekman Street Hospital —as quick as hell, Mr. Van Dine. Damn the traffic lights! Step on it!"

Without looking round I knew what had happened. I swung the car into Centre Street again, and fairly raced for the hospital. We carried Ada into the emergency ward, Heath bawling loudly for the doctor as we passed through the door.

It was more than an hour later when Vance entered the District Attorney's office, where Markham and Heath and I were waiting. He glanced quickly round the room and then looked at our faces.

"I told you to watch her, Sergeant," he said, sinking into a chair; but there was neither reproach nor regret in his voice.

None of us spoke. Despite the effect Ada's suicide had had on us, we were waiting, with a kind of conscious-stricken anxiety, for news of the other girl whom all of us, I think, had vaguely suspected.

Vance understood our silence, and nodded reassuringly.

"Sibella's all right. I took her to the Trinity Hospital in Yonkers. A slight concussion—Ada had struck her with a box-wrench which was always kept under the front seat. She'll be out in a few days. I registered her at the hospital as Mrs. Von Blon, and then phoned her husband. I caught him at home, and he hurried out. He's with her now. Incidentally, the reason we didn't reach him at Mrs. Riglander's is because he stopped at the office for his medicine-case. That delay saved Sibella's life. Otherwise, I doubt if we'd have reached her before Ada had run her over the precipice in the machine."

He drew deeply on his cigarette for a moment. Then he lifted his eyebrows to Markham.

"Cyanide of potassium?"

Markham gave a slight start.

"Yes—or so the doctor thinks. There was a bitter-almond odor on her lips." He shot his head forward angrily. "But if you knew——"

"Oh, I wouldn't have stopped it in any case," interrupted Vance. "I discharged my wholly mythical duty to the State when I warned the Sergeant. However, I didn't know at the time. Von Blon just gave me the information. When I told him what had happened I asked him if he had ever lost any other poisons—you see, I couldn't imagine any one planning so devilish and hazardous an exploit as the Greene murders without preparing for the eventuality of failure. He told me he'd missed a tablet of cyanide from his dark-room about three months ago. And when I jogged his memory he recalled that Ada had been poking round there and asking questions a few days before. The one cyanide tablet was probably all she dared take at the time; so she kept it for herself in case of an emergency."*

"What I want to know, Mr. Vance," said Heath, "is how she worked this scheme. Was there any one else in on the deal?"

"No, Sergeant. Ada planned and executed every part of it."

"But how, in God's name——?"

Vance held up his hand.

"It's all very simple, Sergeant—once you have the key. What misled us was the fiendish cleverness and audacity of the plot. But there's no longer any need to speculate about it. I have a printed and bound explanation of everything that happened. And it's not a fictional or speculative explanation. It's actual criminal history, garnered and recorded by the greatest expert on the subject the world has yet known—Doctor Hans Gross, of Vienna."

He rose and took up his coat.

"I phoned Currie from the hospital, and he has a belated dinner waiting for all of us. When we have eaten, I'll present you with a reconstruction and exposition of the entire case."

* As I learned later, Doctor Von Blon, who was an ardent amateur photographer, often used half-gramme tablets of cyanide of potassium; and there had been three of them in his dark-room when Ada had called. Several days later, when preparing to redevelop a plate, he could find only two, but had thought little of the loss until questioned by Vance.

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XXVI

THE ASTOUNDING TRUTH

(Monday, December 13; 11 p. m.)

"As you know, Markham," Vance began, when we were seated about the library fire late that night, "I finally succeeded in putting together the items of my summary in such a way that I could see plainly who the murderer was.* Once I had found the basic pattern, every detail fitted perfectly into a plastic whole. The technic of the crimes, however, remained obscure; so I asked you to send for the books in Tobias's library—I was sure they would tell me what I wanted to know. First, I went through Gross's 'Handbuch für Untersuchungsrichter,' which I regarded as the most likely source of information. It is an amazing treatise, Markham. It covers the entire field of the history and science of crime; and, in addition, is a compendium of criminal technic, citing specific cases and containing detailed explanations and diagrams. Small wonder it is the world's standard cyclopædia on its subject. As I read it, I found what I was looking for. Ada had copied every act of hers, every method, every device, every detail, from its pages—*from actual criminal history!* We are hardly to be blamed for our inability to combat her schemes; for it was not she alone who was deceiving us; it was the accumulated experience of hundreds of shrewd criminals before her, plus the analytic science of the world's greatest criminologist—Doctor Hans Gross."

He paused to light another cigarette.

"But even when I had found the explanation of her crimes," he continued, "I felt that there was something lacking, some fundamental *penchant*—the thing that made this orgy of horror possible and gave viability, so to speak, to her operations. We knew nothing of Ada's early life or of her progenitors and inherited instincts; and without that knowledge the crimes, despite their clear logic, were incredible. Consequently, my next step was to verify Ada's psychological and environmental sources. I had had a suspicion from the first that she was Frau Mannheim's daughter. But even when I verified this fact I couldn't see its bearing on the case. It was obvious, from our interview with Frau Mannheim, that Tobias and her husband had been in shady deals together in the old days; and she later admitted to me that her husband had died thirteen years ago, in October, at New Orleans after a year's illness in a hospital. She also said, as you may recall, that she had seen Tobias a year prior to her husband's death. This would have been fourteen years ago—just the time Ada was adopted by Tobias.* I thought there might be some connection between Mannheim and the crimes, and I even toyed with the idea that Sproot was Mannheim, and that a dirty thread of blackmail ran through the situation. So I decided to investigate. My mysterious trip last week was to New Orleans; and there I had no difficulty in learning the truth. By looking up the death records for October thirteen years ago, I discovered that Mannheim had been in an asylum for the criminally insane for a year preceding his death. And from the police I ascertained something of his record. Adolph Mannheim—Ada's father—was, it seems, a famous German criminal and murderer, who had been sentenced to death, but had escaped from the penitentiary at Stuttgart and come to America. I have a suspicion that the departed Tobias was, in some way, mixed up in that escape. But whether or not I wrong him, the fact remains that Ada's father was homicidal and a professional criminal. And therein lies the explanat'ry background of her actions. . . ."

"You mean she was crazy like her old man?" asked Heath.

"No, Sergeant. I merely mean that the potentialities of criminality had been handed down to her in her blood. When the motive for the crimes became powerful, her inherited instincts asserted themselves."

* I later asked Vance to rearrange the items for me in the order of his final sequence. The distribution, which told him the truth, was as follows: 3, 4, 44, 92, 9, 6, 2, 47, 1, 5, 32, 31, 98, 8, 81, 84, 82, 7, 10, 11, 61, 15, 16, 93, 33, 94, 76, 75, 48, 17, 38, 55, 54, 18, 39, 56, 41, 42, 28, 43, 58, 59, 83, 74, 40, 12, 34, 13, 14, 37, 22, 23, 35, 36, 19, 73, 26, 20, 21, 45, 25, 46, 27, 29, 30, 57, 77, 24, 78, 79, 51, 50, 52, 53, 49, 95, 80, 85, 86, 87, 88, 60, 62, 64, 63, 66, 65, 96, 89, 67, 71, 69, 68, 70, 97, 90, 91, 72.

* We later learned from Mrs. Mannheim that Mannheim had once saved Tobias Greene from criminal prosecution by taking upon himself the entire blame of one of Tobias's shadiest extra-legal transactions; and had exacted from Tobias the promise that he would adopt Ada and care for her in event of his own death or incarceration. Also, I imagine that Tobias, in his youth, was sentimentally interested in Mrs. Mannheim; but there is, of course, no proof of such an attachment.

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"But mere money," put in Markham, "seems hardly a strong enough motive to inspire such atrocities as hers."

"It wasn't money alone that inspired her. The real motive went much deeper. Indeed, it was perhaps the most powerful of all human motives—a strange, terrible combination of hate and love and jealousy and a desire for freedom. To begin with, she was the Cinderella in that abnormal Greene family, looked down upon, treated like a servant, made to spend her time caring for a nagging invalid, and forced—as Sibella put it—to earn her livelihood. Can you not see her for fourteen years brooding over this treatment, nourishing her resentment, absorbing the poison about her, and coming at length to despise every one in that household? That alone would have been enough to awaken her congenital instincts. One almost wonders that she did not break forth long before. But another equally potent element entered the situation. She fell in love with Von Blon—a natural thing for a girl in her position to do—and then learned that Sibella had won his affections. She either knew or strongly suspected that they were married; and her normal hatred of her sister was augmented by a vicious and eroding jealousy. . . .

"Now, Ada was the only member of the family who, according to the terms of old Tobias's will, was not compelled to live on the estate in event of marriage; and in this fact she saw a chance to snatch all the things she craved and at the same time to rid herself of the persons against whom her whole passionate nature cried out in deadly hatred. She calculated to get rid of the family, inherit the Greene millions, and set her cap for Von Blon. There was vengeance, too, as a motivating factor in all this; but I'm inclined to think the amatory phase of the affair was the prim'ry actuating force in the series of horrors she later perpetrated. It gave her strength and courage; it lifted her into that ecstatic realm where anything seemed possible, and where she was willing to pay any price for the desired end. And there is one point I might recall parenthetically—you remember that Barton, the younger maid, told us how Ada sometimes acted like a devil and used vile language. That fact should have given me a hint; but who could have taken Barton seriously at that stage of the game? . . .

"To trace the origin of her diabolical scheme we must first consider the locked library. Alone in the house, bored, resentful, tied down—it was inevitable that this pervertedly romantic child should play Pandora. She had every opportunity of securing the key and having a duplicate made; and so the library became her retreat, her escape from the gruelling, monotonous routine of her existence. There she ran across those books on criminology. They appealed to her, not only as a vicious outlet for her smouldering, repressed hatred, but because they struck a responsive chord in her tainted nature. Eventually she came upon Gross's great manual, and thus found the entire technic of crime laid out before her, with diagrams and examples—not a handbook for examining magistrates, but a guide for a potential murderer! Slowly the idea of her gory orgy took shape. At first perhaps she only imagined, as a means of self-gratification, the application of this technic of murder to those she hated. But after a time, no doubt, the conception became real. She saw its practical possibilities; and the terrible plot was formulated. She created this horror, and then, with her diseased imagination, she came to believe in it. Her plausible stories to us, her superb acting, her clever deceptions—all were part of this horrible fantasy she had engendered. That book of Grimm's 'Fairy-Tales'!—I should have understood. Y' see, it wasn't histrionism altogether on her part; it was a kind of demoniac possession. She lived her dream. Many young girls are like that under the stress of ambition and hatred. Constance Kent completely deceived the whole of Scotland Yard into believing in her innocence."

Vance smoked a moment thoughtfully.

"It's curious how we instinctively close our eyes to the truth when history is filled with substantiating examples of the very thing we are contemplating. The annals of crime contain numerous instances of girls in Ada's position who have been guilty of atrocious crimes. Besides the famous case of Constance Kent, there were, for example, Marie Boyer, and Madeleine Smith, and Grete Beyer.* I wonder if we'd have suspected them——"

* An account of the cases of Madeleine Smith and Constance Kent may be found in Edmund Lester Pearson's "Murder at Smutty Nose"; and a record of Marie Boyer's case is included in H. B. Irving's "A Book of Remarkable Criminals." Grete Beyer was the last woman to be publicly executed in Germany.

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"Keep to the present, Vance," interposed Markham impatiently. "You say Ada took all her ideas from Gross. But Gross's handbook is written in German. How did you know she spoke German well enough——?"

"That Sunday when I went to the house with Van I inquired of Ada if Sibella spoke German. I put my questions in such a way that she could not answer without telling me whether or not she, too, knew German well; and she even used a typical German locution —'Sibella speaks very well German'—showing that that language was almost instinctive with her. Incidentally, I wanted her to think that I suspected Sibella, so that she would not hasten matters until I returned from New Orleans. I knew that as long as Sibella was in Atlantic City she was safe from Ada."

"But what I want to know," put in Heath, "is how she killed Rex when she was sitting in Mr. Markham's office."

"Let us take things in order, Sergeant," answered Vance. "Julia was killed first because she was the manager of the establishment. With her out of the way, Ada would have a free hand. And, another thing, the death of Julia at the start fitted best into the scheme she had outlined; it gave her the most plausible setting for staging the attempted murder on herself. Ada had undoubtedly heard some mention of Chester's revolver, and after she had secured it she waited for the opportunity to strike the first blow. The propitious circumstances fell on the night of November 8; and at half past eleven, when the house was asleep, she knocked on Julia's door. She was admitted, and doubtless sat on the edge of Julia's bed telling some story to explain her late visit. Then she drew the gun from under her dressing-gown and shot Julia through the heart. Back in her own bedroom, with the lights on, she stood before the large mirror of the dressing-table, and, holding the gun in her right hand, placed it against her left shoulder-blade at an oblique angle. The mirror and the lights were essential, for she could thus see exactly where to point the muzzle of the revolver. All this occupied the three-minute interval between the shots. Then she pulled the trigger——"

"But a girl shooting herself as a fake!" objected Heath. "It ain't natural."

"But Ada wasn't natural, Sergeant. None of the plot was natural. That was why I was so anxious to look up her family history. But as to shooting herself; that was quite logical when one considers her true character. And, as a matter of fact, there was little or no danger attaching to it. The gun was on a hair-trigger, and little pressure was needed to discharge it. A slight flesh wound was the worst she had to fear. Moreover, history is full of cases of self-mutilation where the object to be gained was far smaller than what Ada was after. Gross is full of them. . . ."

He took up Volume I of the "Handbuch für Untersuchungsrichter," which lay on the table beside him, and opened it at a marked page.

"Listen to this, Sergeant. I'll translate the passage roughly as I read: *'It is not uncommon to find people who inflict wounds on themselves; such are, besides persons pretending to be the victims of assaults with deadly weapons, those who try to extort damages or blackmail. Thus it often happens that, after an insignificant scuffle, one of the combatants shows wounds which he pretends to have received. It is characteristic of these voluntary mutilations that most frequently those who perform them do not quite complete the operation, and that they are for the most part people who manifest excessive piety, or lead a solitary life.'** . . . And surely, Sergeant, you are familiar with the self-mutilation of soldiers to escape service. The most common method used by them is to place their hand over the muzzle of the gun and blow their fingers off."

Vance closed the book.

"And don't forget that the girl was hopeless, desperate, and unhappy, with everything to win and nothing to lose. She would probably have committed suicide if she had not worked out the plan of the murders. A superficial wound in the shoulder meant little to her in view of what she was to gain by it. And women have an almost infinite capacity

* "Selbstverletzungen kommen nicht selten vor; abgesehen von solchen bei fingierten Raubanfällen, stösst man auf sie dann, wenn Entschädigungen erpresst werden sollen; so geschieht es, dass nach einer harmlosen Balgerei einer der Kämpfenden mit Verletzungen auftritt, die er damals erlitten haben will. Kenntlich sind solche Selbstverstümmelungen daran, dass die Betreffenden meistens die Operation wegen der grossen Schmerzen nicht ganz zu Ende führen, und dass es meistens Leute mit übertrieben pietistischer Färbung und mehr einsamen Lebenswandels sind."—H. Gross, "Handbuch für Untersuchungsrichter als System der Kriminalistik," I, pp. 32-34.

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for self-immolation. With Ada, it was part of her abnormal condition.—No, Sergeant; the self-shooting was perfectly consistent in the circumstances. . . ."

"But in the back!" Heath looked dumbfounded. "That's what gets me. Whoever heard——?"

"Just a moment." Vance took up Volume II of the "Handbuch" and opened it to a marked page. "Gross, for instance, has heard of many such cases—in fact, they're quite common on the Continent. And his record of them indubitably gave Ada the idea for shooting herself in the back. Here's a single paragraph culled from many pages of similar cases: *'That you should not be deceived by the seat of the wound is proved by the following two cases. In the Vienna Prater a man killed himself in the presence of several people by shooting himself in the back of the head with a revolver. Without the testimony of several witnesses nobody would have accepted the theory of suicide. A soldier killed himself by a shot with his military rifle through the back, by fixing the rifle in a certain position and then lying down over it. Here again the position of the wound seemed to exclude the theory of suicide.'* "*

"Wait a minute!" Heath heaved himself forward and shook his cigar at Vance. "What about the gun? Sproot entered Ada's room right after the shot was fired, and there wasn't no sign of a gun!"

Vance, without answering, merely turned the pages of Gross's "Handbuch" to where another marker protruded, and began translating:

"*'Early one morning the authorities were informed that the corpse of a murdered man had been found. At the spot indicated the body was discovered of a grain merchant, A. M., supposed to be a well-to-do man, face downward with a gunshot wound behind the ear. The bullet, after passing through the brain, had lodged in the frontal bone above the left eye. The place where the corpse was found was in the middle of a bridge over a deep stream. Just when the inquiry was concluding and the corpse was about to be removed for the post mortem, the investigating officer observed quite by chance that on the decayed wooden parapet of the bridge, almost opposite to the spot where the corpse lay, there was a small but perfectly fresh dent which appeared to have been caused by a violent blow on the upper edge of the parapet of a hard and angular object. He immediately suspected that the dent had some connection with the murder. Accordingly he determined to drag the bed of the stream below the bridge, when almost immediately there was picked up a strong cord about fourteen feet long with a large stone at one end and at the other a discharged pistol, the barrel of which fitted exactly the bullet extracted from the head of A. M. The case was thus evidently one of suicide. A. M. had hung the stone over the parapet of the bridge and discharged the pistol behind his ear. The moment he fired he let go the pistol, which the weight of the stone dragged over the parapet into the water.'* . . . Does that answer your question, Sergeant?"

* "Dass man sich durch den Sitz der Wunde niemals täuschen lassen darf, beweisen zwei Fälle. Im Wiener Prater hatte sich ein Mann in Gegenwart mehrerer Personen getötet, indem er sich mit einem Revolver in den Hinterkopf schoss. Wären nicht die Aussagen der Zeugen vorgelegen, hätte wohl kaum jemand an einen Selbstmord geglaubt. Ein Soldat tötete sich durch einen in den Rücken gehenden Schuss aus einem Militärgewehr, über das er nach entsprechender Fixierung sich gelegt hatte; auch hier wäre aus dem Sitz der Wunde wohl kaum auf Selbstmord geschlossen worden."—*Ibid.*, II, p. 843.

* "Es wurde zeitlich morgens dem UR. die Meldung von der Auffindung eines 'Ermordeten' überbracht. An Ort und Stelle fand sich der Leichnam eines für wohlhabend geltenden Getreidehändlers M., auf dem Gesichte liegend, mit einer Schusswunde hinter dem rechten Ohre. Die Kugel war über dem linken Auge im Stirnknochen stecken geblieben, nachdem sie das Gehirn durchdrungen hatte. Die Fundstelle der Leiche befand sich etwa in der Mitte einer über einen ziemlich tiefen Fluss führenden Brücke. Am Schlusse der Lokalerhebungen und als die Leiche eben zur Obduktion fortgebracht werden sollte, fiel es dem UR. zufällig auf, dass das (hölzerne und wettergraue) Brückengeländer an der Stelle, wo auf dem Boden der Leichnam lag, eine kleine und sichtlich ganz frische Beschädigung aufwies, so als ob man dort (am oberen Rande) mit einem harten, kantigen Körper heftig angestossen wäre. Der Gedanke, dass dieser Umstand mit dem Morde in Zusammenhang stehe, war nicht gut von der Hand zu weisen. Ein Kahn war bald zur Stelle und am Brückenjoche befestigt; nun wurde vom Kahne aus (unter der fraglichen Stelle) der Flussgrund mit Rechen an langen Stielen sorgfältig abgesucht. Nach kurzer Arbeit kam wirklich etwas Seltsames zutage: eine etwa 4 *m* lange starke Schnur, an deren einem Ende ein grosser Feldstein, an deren anderem Ende eine abgeschossene Pistole befestigt war, in deren Lauf die später aus dem Kopfe des M. genommene Kugel genau passte. Nun war die Sache klarer Selbstmord; der Mann hatte sich mit der aufgefundenen Vorrichtung auf die Brücke begeben, den Stein über das Brückengeländer gehängt und sich die Kugel hinter

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Heath stared at him with gaping eyes.

"You mean her gun went outa the window the same like that guy's gun went over the bridge?"

"There can be no doubt about it. There was no other place for the gun to go. The window, I learned from Sproot, was open a foot, and Ada stood before the window when she shot herself. Returning from Julia's room she attached a cord to the revolver with a weight of some kind on the other end, and hung the weight out of the window. When her hand released the weapon it was simply drawn over the sill and disappeared in the drift of soft snow on the balcony steps. And there is where the importance of the weather came in. Ada's plan needed an unusual amount of snow; and the night of November 8 was ideal for her grisly purpose."

"My God, Vance!" Markham's tone was strained and unnatural. "This thing begins to sound more like a fantastic nightmare than a reality."

"Not only was it a reality, Markham," said Vance gravely, "but it was an actual duplication of reality. It had all been done before and duly recorded in Gross's treatise, with names, dates, and details."

"Hell! No wonder we couldn't find the gun." Heath spoke with awed disgust. "And what about the footprints, Mr. Vance? I suppose she faked 'em all."

"Yes, Sergeant—with Gross's minute instructions and the footprint forgeries of many famous criminals to guide her, she faked them. As soon as it had stopped snowing that night she slipped down-stairs, put on a pair of Chester's discarded galoshes, and walked to the front gate and back. Then she hid the galoshes in the library."

Vance turned once more to Gross's manual.

"There's everything here that one could possibly want to know about the making and detection of footprints, and—what is more to the point—about the manufacturing of footprints in shoes too large for one's feet.—Let me translate a short passage: *'The criminal may intend to cast suspicion upon another person, especially if he foresees that suspicion may fall upon himself. In this case he produces clear footprints which, so to speak, leap to the eyes, by wearing shoes which differ essentially from his own. One may often in this way, as has been proved by numerous experiments, produce footprints which deceive perfectly.'** . . . And here at the end of the paragraph Gross refers specifically to galoshes†—a fact which very likely gave Ada her inspiration to use Chester's overshoes. She was shrewd enough to profit by the suggestions in this passage."

"And she was shrewd enough to hoodwink all of us when we questioned her," commented Markham bitterly.

"True. But that was because she had a *folie de grandeur*, and lived the story. Moreover, it was all based on fact; its details were grounded in reality. Even the shuffling sound she said she heard in her room was an imaginative projection of the actual shuffling sound she made when she walked in Chester's huge galoshes. Also, her own shuffling, no doubt, suggested to her how Mrs. Greene's footsteps would have sounded had the old lady regained the use of her legs. And I imagine it was Ada's original purpose to cast a certain amount of suspicion on Mrs. Greene from the very beginning. But Sibella's attitude during that first interview caused her to change her tactics. As I see it, Sibella was suspicious of little sister, and talked the situation over with Chester, who may also have had misgivings about Ada. You remember his *sub-rosa* chat with Sibella when he went to summon her to the drawing-room. He was probably informing her that he hadn't yet made an accusation against Ada, and was advising her to go easy until there was some specific proof. Sibella evidently agreed, and refrained from any direct charge until Ada, in telling her grotesque fairy-tale about the in-

dem rechten Ohre ins Hirn gejagt. Als er getroffen war, liess er die Pistole infolge des durch den Stein bewirkten Zuges aus und diese wurde von dem schweren Steine an der Schnur über das Geländer und in das Wasser gezogen. Hierbei hatte die Pistole, als sie das Geländer passierte, heftig an dieses angeschlagen und die betreffende Verletzung erzeugt." —*Ibid.*, II, pp. 834-836.

* "Die Absicht kann dahin gehen, den Verdacht von sich auf jemand anderen zu wälzen, was namentlich dann Sinn hat, wenn der Täter schon im voraus annehmen durfte, dass sich der Verdacht auf ihn lenken werde. In diesem Falle erzeugt er recht auffallende, deutliche Spuren und zwar mit angezogenen Schuhen, die von den seinigen sich wesentlich unterscheiden. Man kann, wie angestellte Versuche beweisen, in dieser Weise recht gute Spuren erzeugen."—*Ibid.*, II, p. 667.

† "Über Gummiüberschuhe und Galoschen s. Loock; Chem. u. Phot. bei Krim. Forschungen: Düsseldorf, II, p. 56."—*Ibid.*, II, p. 668.

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truder, rather implied it was a woman's hand that had touched her in the dark. That was too much for Sibella, who thought Ada was referring to her; and she burst forth with her accusation, despite its seeming absurdity. The amazing thing about it was that it happened to be the truth. She named the murderer and stated a large part of the motive before any of us remotely guessed the truth, even though she did back down and change her mind when the inconsistency of it was pointed out to her. And she really did see Ada in Chester's room looking for the revolver."

Markham nodded.

"It's astonishing. But after the accusation, when Ada knew that Sibella suspected her, why didn't she kill Sibella next?"

"She was too canny. It would have tended to give weight to Sibella's accusation. Oh, Ada played her hand perfectly."

"Go on with the story, sir," urged Heath, intolerant of these side issues.

"Very well, Sergeant." Vance shifted more comfortably into his chair. "But first we must revert to the weather; for the weather ran like a sinister motif through all that followed. The second night after Julia's death it was quite warm, and the snow had melted considerably. That was the night chosen by Ada to retrieve the gun. A wound like hers rarely keeps one in bed over forty-eight hours; and Ada was well enough on Wednesday night to slip into a coat, step out on the balcony, and walk down the few steps to where the gun lay hidden. She merely brought it back and took it to bed with her—the last place any one would have thought to look for it. Then she waited patiently for the snow to fall again—which it did the next night, stopping, as you may remember, about eleven o'clock. The stage was set. The second act of the tragedy was about to begin. . . .

"Ada rose quietly, put on her coat, and went down to the library. Getting into the galoshes, she again walked to the front gate and back. Then she went directly up-stairs so that her tracks would show on the marble steps, and hid the galoshes temporarily in the linen-closet. That was the shuffling sound and the closing door that Rex heard a few minutes before Chester was shot. Ada, you recall, told us afterward she had heard nothing; but when we repeated Rex's story to her she became frightened and conveniently remembered having heard a door close. My word! That was a ticklish moment for her. But she certainly carried it off well. And I can now understand her obvious relief when we showed her the pattern of the footprints and let her think we believed the murderer came from outside. . . . Well, after she had removed the galoshes and put them in the linen-closet, she took off her coat, donned a dressing-gown, and went to Chester's room—probably opened the door without knocking, and went in with a friendly greeting. I picture her as sitting on the arm of Chester's chair, or the edge of the desk, and then, in the midst of some trivial remark, drawing the revolver, placing it against his breast, and pulling the trigger before he had time to recover from his horrified astonishment. He moved instinctively, though, just as the weapon exploded—which would account for the diagonal course of the bullet. Then Ada returned quickly to her own room and got into bed. Thus was another chapter written in the Greene tragedy."

"Did it strike you as strange," asked Markham, "that Von Blon was not at his office during the commission of either of the crimes?"

"At first—yes. But, after all, there was nothing unusual in the fact that a doctor should have been out at that time of night."

"It's easy enough to see how Ada got rid of Julia and Chester," grumbled Heath. "But what stops me is how she murdered Rex."

"Really, y' know, Sergeant," returned Vance, "that trick of hers shouldn't cause you any perplexity. I'll never forgive myself for not having guessed it long ago,—Ada certainly gave us enough clews to work on. But, before I describe it to you, let me recall a certain architectural detail of the Greene mansion. There is a Tudor fireplace, with carved wooden panels, in Ada's room, and another fireplace — a duplicate of Ada's — in Rex's room; and these two fireplaces are back to back on the same wall. The Greene house, as you know, is very old, and at some time in the past—perhaps when the fireplaces were built—an aperture was made between the two rooms, running from one of the panels in Ada's mantel to the corresponding panel in Rex's mantel. This miniature tunnel is about six inches square—the exact size of the panels—and a little over two feet long, or the depth of the two mantels and the wall. It was originally used, I imagine, for private communica-

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tion between the two rooms. But that point is immaterial. The fact remains that such a shaft exists—I verified it to-night on my way downtown from the hospital. I might also add that the panel at either end of the shaft is on a spring hinge, so that when it is opened and released it closes automatically, snapping back into place without giving any indication that it is anything more than a solid part of the woodwork——"

"I get you!" exclaimed Heath, with the excitement of satisfaction. "Rex was shot by the old man-killing safe idea: the burglar opens the safe door and gets a bullet in his head from a stationary gun."

"Exactly. And the same device has been used in scores of murders. In the early days out West an enemy would go to a rancher's cabin during the tenant's absence, hang a shotgun from the ceiling over the door, and tie one end of a string to the trigger and the other end to the latch. When the rancher returned—perhaps days later—his brains would be blown out as he entered his cabin; and the murderer would, at the time, be in another part of the country."

"Sure!" The Sergeant's eyes sparkled. "There was a shooting like that in Atlanta two years ago—Boscomb was the name of the murdered man. And in Richmond, Virginia——"

"There have been many instances of it, Sergeant. Gross quotes two famous Austrian cases, and also has something to say about this method in general."

Again he opened the "Handbuch."

"On page 943 Gross remarks: '*The latest American safety devices have nothing to do with the safe itself, and can in fact be used with any receptacle. They act through chemicals or automatic firing devices, and their object is to make the presence of a human being who illegally opens the safe impossible on physical grounds. The judicial question would have to be decided whether one is legally entitled to kill a burglar without further ado or damage his health. However, a burglar in Berlin in 1902 was shot through the forehead by a self-shooter attached to a safe in an exporting house. This style of self-shooter has also been used by murderers. A mechanic, G. Z., attached a pistol in a china-closet, fastening the trigger to the catch, and thus shot his wife when he himself was in another city. R. C., a merchant of Budapest, fastened a revolver in a humidor belonging to his brother, which, when the lid was opened, fired and sent a bullet into his brother's abdomen. The explosion jerked the box from the table, and thus exposed the mechanism before the merchant had a chance to remove it.*'* . . . In both these latter cases Gross gives a detailed description of the mechanisms employed. And it will interest you, Sergeant—in view of what I am about to tell you—to know that the revolver in the china-closet was held in place by a *Stiefelknecht,* or bootjack."

He closed the volume but held it on his lap.

"There, unquestionably, is where Ada got the suggestion for Rex's murder. She and Rex had probably discovered the hidden passageway between their rooms years ago. I imagine that as children—they were about the same age, don't y' know—they used it as a secret means of correspondence. This would account for the name by which they both knew it—'our private mail-box.' And, given this knowledge between Ada and Rex, the method of the murder becomes perfectly clear. To-night I found an old-fashioned bootjack in Ada's clothes-closet—probably taken from Tobias's library. Its width, overall, was just six inches, and it was a little less than two feet long—it fitted perfectly into the communicating cupboard. Ada, following Gross's diagram, pressed the handle of the gun tightly between the tapering claws of the bootjack,

* "Die neuesten amerikanischen Schutzvorrichtungen haben direkt mit der Kasse selbst nichts zu tun und können eigentlich an jedem Behältnisse angebracht werden. Sie bestehen aus chemischen Schutzmitteln oder Selbstschüssen, und wollen die Anwesenheit eines Menschen, der den Schrank unbefugt geöffnet hat, aus sanitären oder sonst physischen Gründen unmöglich machen. Auch die juristische Seite der Frage ist zu erwägen, da man den Einbrecher doch nicht ohne weiteres töten oder an der Gesundheit schädigen darf. Nichtsdestoweniger wurde im Jahre 1902 ein Einbrecher in Berlin durch einen solchen Selbstschuss in die Stirne getötet, der an die Panzertüre einer Kasse befestigt war. Derartige Selbstschüsse wurden auch zu Morden verwendet; der Mechaniker G. Z. stellte einen Revolver in einer Kredenz auf, verband den Drücker mit der Türe durch eine Schnur und erschoss auf diese Art seine Frau, während er tatsächlich von seinem Wohnorte abwesend war. R. C. ein Budapester Kaufmann befestigte in einem, seinem Bruder gehörigen Zigarrenkasten, eine Pistole, die beim Öffnen des Deckels seinen Bruder durch einen Unterleibsschuss tötlich verletzte. Der Rückschlag warf die Kiste von ihrem Standort, sodass der Mördermechanismus zu Tage trat, ehe R. C. denselben bei Seite schaffen konnte." —*Ibid.*, II, p. 943.

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which would have held it like a vise; then tied a string to the trigger, and attached the other end to the inside of Rex's panel, so that when the panel was opened wide the revolver, being on a hair-trigger, would discharge straight along the shaft and inevitably kill any one looking into the opening. When Rex fell with a bullet in his forehead the panel flapped back into place on its spring hinge; and a second later there was no visible evidence whatever pointing to the origin of the shot. And here we also have the explanation for Rex's calm expression of unawareness. When Ada returned with us from the District Attorney's office, she went directly to her room, removed the gun and the bootjack, hid them in her closet, and came down to the drawing-room to report the foot-tracks on her carpet —foot-tracks she herself had made before leaving the house. It was just before she came down-stairs, by the way, that she stole the morphine and strychnine from Von Blon's case."

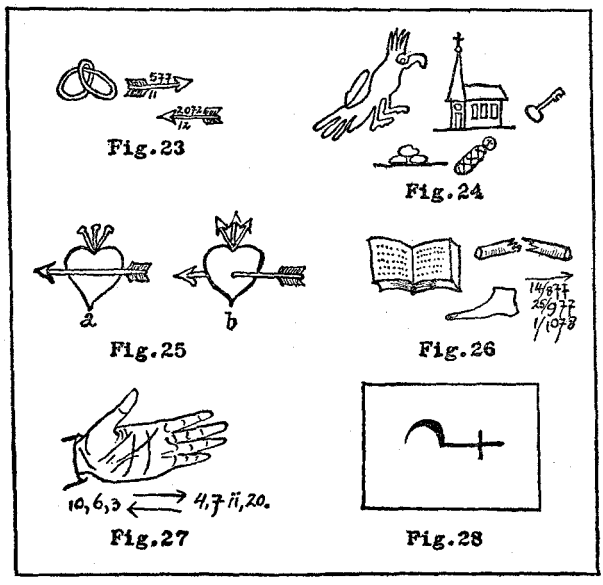
"But, my God, Vance!" said Markham. "Suppose her mechanism had failed to work. She would have been in for it then."

"I hardly think so. If, by any remote chance, the trap had not operated or Rex had recovered, she could easily have put the blame on some one else. She had merely to say she had secreted the diagram in the chute and that this other person had prepared the trap later on. There would have been no proof of her having set the gun."

"What about that diagram, sir?" asked Heath.

For answer Vance again took up the second volume of Gross and, opening it, extended it toward us. On the right-hand page were a number of curious line-drawings, which I reproduce here.

"There are the three stones, and the parrot, and the heart, and even your arrow, Sergeant. They're all criminal graphic symbols; and Ada simply utilized them in her description. The story of her finding the paper in the hall was a pure fabrication, but she knew it would pique our curiosity. The truth is, I suspected the paper of being faked by some one, for it evidently contained the signs of several types of criminal, and the symbols were meaninglessly jumbled. I rather imagined it was a false clew deliberately placed in the hall for us to find—like the footprints; but I certainly didn't suspect Ada of having made up the tale. Now, however, as I look back at the episode it strikes me as deuced queer that she shouldn't have brought so apparently significant a paper to the office. Her failure to do so was neither logical nor reasonable; and I ought to have been suspicious. But—my word!—what was one illogical item more or less in such a mélange of inconsistencies? As it happened, her decoy worked beautifully, and gave her the opportunity to telephone Rex to look into the chute. But it didn't really matter. If the scheme had fallen through that morning, it would have been successful later on. Ada was highly persevering."



"You think then," put in Markham, "that Rex really heard the shot in Ada's room that first night, and confided in her?"

"Undoubtedly. That part of her story was true enough. I'm inclined to think that Rex heard the shot and had a vague idea Mrs. Greene had fired it. Being rather close to his mother temperamentally, he said nothing. Later he voiced his suspicions to Ada; and that confession gave her the idea for killing him—or, rather, for perfecting the technic she had already decided on; for Rex would have been shot through the secret cupboard in any

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event. But Ada now saw a way of establishing a perfect alibi for the occasion; although even her idea of being actually with the police when the shot was fired was not original. In Gross's chapter on alibis there is much suggestive material along that line."

Heath sucked his teeth wonderingly.

"I'm glad I don't run across many of her kind," he remarked.

"She was her father's daughter," said Vance. "But too much credit should not be given her, Sergeant. She had a printed and diagrammed guide for everything. There was little for her to do but follow instructions and keep her head. And as for Rex's murder, don't forget that, although she was actually in Mr. Markham's office at the time of the shooting, she personally engineered the entire *coup*. Think back. She refused to let either you or Mr. Markham come to the house, and insisted upon visiting the office. Once there, she told her story and suggested that Rex be summoned immediately. She even went so far as to plead with us to call him by phone. Then, when we had complied, she quickly informed us of the mysterious diagram, and offered to tell Rex exactly where she had hidden it, so he could bring it with him. And we sat there calmly, listening to her send Rex to his death! Her actions at the Stock Exchange should have given me a hint; but I confess I was particularly blind that morning. She was in a state of high nervous excitement; and when she broke down and sobbed on Mr. Markham's desk after he had told her of Rex's death, her tears were quite real—only, they were not for Rex; they were the reaction from that hour of terrific tension."

"I begin to understand why no one upstairs heard the shot," said Markham. "The revolver detonating in the wall, as it were, would have been almost completely muffled. But why should Sproot have heard it so distinctly down-stairs?"

"You remember there was a fireplace in the living-room directly beneath Ada's—Chester once told us it was rarely lighted because it wouldn't draw properly—and Sproot was in the butler's pantry just beyond. The sound of the report went downward through the flue and, as a result, was heard plainly on the lower floor."

"You said a minute ago, Mr. Vance," argued Heath, "that Rex maybe suspected the old lady. Then why should he have accused Von Blon the way he did that day he had a fit?"

"The accusation primarily, I think, was a sort of instinctive effort to drive the idea of Mrs. Greene's guilt from his own mind. Then again, as Von Blon explained, Rex was frightened after you had questioned him about the revolver, and wanted to divert suspicion from himself."

"Get on with the story of Ada's plot, Vance." This time it was Markham who was impatient.

"The rest seems pretty obvious, don't y' know. It was unquestionably Ada who was listening at the library door the afternoon we were there. She realized we had found the books and galoshes; and she had to think fast. So, when we came out, she told us the dramatic yarn of having seen her mother walking, which was sheer moonshine. She had run across those books on paralysis, d' ye see, and they had suggested to her the possibility of focussing suspicion on Mrs. Greene—the chief object of her hate. It is probably true, as Von Blon said, that the two books do not deal with actual hysterical paralysis and somnambulism, but they no doubt contain references to these types of paralysis. I rather think Ada had intended all along to kill the old lady last and have it appear as the suicide of the murderer. But the proposed examination by Oppenheimer changed all that. She learned of the examination when she heard Von Blon apprise Mrs. Greene of it on his morning visit; and, having told us of that mythical midnight promenade, she couldn't delay matters any longer. The old lady had to die—*before Oppenheimer arrived*. And half an hour later Ada took the morphine. She feared to give Mrs. Greene the strychnine at once lest it appear suspicious. . . ."

"That's where those books on poisons come in, isn't it, Mr. Vance?" interjected Heath. "When Ada had decided to use poison on some of the family, she got all the dope she needed on the subject outa the library."

"Precisely. She herself took just enough morphine to render her unconscious—probably about two grains. And to make sure she would get immediate assistance she devised the simple trick of having Sibella's dog appear to give the alarm. Incidentally, this trick cast suspicion on Sibella. After Ada had swallowed the morphine, she merely waited until she began to feel drowsy, pulled the bell-cord,

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caught the tassel in the dog's teeth, and lay back. She counterfeited a good deal of her illness; but Drumm couldn't have detected her malingering even if he had been as great a doctor as he wanted us to believe; for the symptoms for all doses of morphine taken by mouth are practically the same during the first half-hour. And, once she was on her feet, she had only to watch for an opportunity of giving the strychnine to Mrs. Greene. . . ."

"It all seems too cold-blooded to be real," murmured Markham.

"And yet there has been any number of precedents for Ada's actions. Do you recall the mass murders of those three nurses, Madame Jegado, Frau Zwanzigger, and Vrouw Van der Linden? And there was Mrs. Belle Gunness, the female Bluebeard; and Amelia Elizabeth Dyer, the Reading baby-farmer; and Mrs. Pearcey. Cold-blooded? Yes! But in Ada's case there was passion too. I'm inclined to believe that it takes a particularly hot flame —a fire at white heat, in fact—to carry the human heart through such a Gethsemane. However that may be, Ada watched for her chance to poison Mrs. Greene, and found it that night. The nurse went to the third floor to prepare for bed between eleven and eleven-thirty; and during that half-hour Ada visited her mother's room. Whether she suggested the citrocarbonate or Mrs. Greene herself asked for it, we'll never know. Probably the former, for Ada had always given it to her at night. When the nurse came down-stairs again Ada was already back in bed, apparently asleep, and Mrs. Greene was on the verge of her first—and, let us hope, her only —convulsion."

"Doremus's *post-mortem* report must have given her a terrific shock," commented Markham.

"It did. It upset all her calculations. Imagine her feelings when we informed her that Mrs. Greene couldn't have walked! She backed out of the danger nicely, though. The detail of the Oriental shawl, however, nearly entangled her. But even that point she turned to her own advantage by using it as a clew against Sibella."

"How do you account for Mrs. Mannheim's actions during that interview?" asked Markham. "You remember her saying it might have been she whom Ada saw in the hall."

A cloud came over Vance's face.

"I think," he said sadly, "that Frau Mannheim began to suspect her little Ada at that point. She knew the terrible history of the girl's father, and perhaps had lived in fear of some criminal outcropping in the child."

There was a silence for several moments. Each of us was busy with his own thoughts. Then Vance continued:

"After Mrs. Greene's death, only Sibella stood between Ada and her blazing goal; and it was Sibella herself who gave her the idea for a supposedly safe way to commit the final murder. Weeks ago, on a ride Van and I took with the two girls and Von Blon, Sibella's venomous pique led her to make a foolish remark about running one's victim over a precipice in a machine; and it no doubt appealed to Ada's sense of the fitness of things that Sibella should thus suggest the means of her own demise. I wouldn't be at all surprised if Ada intended, after having killed her sister, to say that Sibella had tried to murder *her*, but that she had suspected the other's purpose and jumped from the car in time to save herself; and that Sibella had miscalculated the car's speed and been carried over the precipice. The fact that Von Blon and Van and I had heard Sibella speculate on just such a method of murder would have given weight to Ada's story. And what a neat ending it would have made—Sibella, the murderer, dead; the case closed; Ada, the inheritor of the Greene millions, free to do as she chose! And—'pon my soul, Markham!—it came very near succeeding."

Vance sighed, and reached for the decanter. After refilling our glasses he settled back and smoked moodily.

"I wonder how long this terrible plot had been in preparation. We'll never know. Maybe years. There was no haste in Ada's preparations. Everything was worked out carefully; and she let circumstances—or, rather, opportunity—guide her. Once she had secured the revolver, it was only a question of waiting for a chance when she could make the footprints and be sure the gun would sink out of sight in the snow-drift on the balcony steps. Yes, the most essential condition of her scheme was the snow. . . . Amazin'!"

There is little more to add to this record. The truth was not given out, and the case was "shelved." The following year Tobias's will was upset by the Supreme Court in

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Equity—that is, the twenty-five-year domiciliary clause was abrogated in view of all that had happened at the house; and Sibella came into the entire Greene fortune. How much Markham had to do with the decision, through his influence with the Administration judge who rendered it, I don't know; and naturally I have never asked. But the old Greene mansion was, as you remember, torn down shortly afterward, and the estate sold to a realty corporation.

Mrs. Mannheim, broken-hearted over Ada's death, claimed her inheritance—which Sibella generously doubled—and returned to Germany to seek what comfort she might among the nieces and nephews with whom, according to Chester, she was constantly corresponding. Sproot went back to England. He told Vance before departing that he had long planned a cottage retreat in Surrey where he could loaf and invite his soul. I picture him now, sitting on an ivied porch overlooking the Downs, reading his beloved Martial.

Doctor and Mrs. Von Blon, immediately after the court's decision relating to the will, sailed for the Riviera and spent a belated honeymoon there. They are now settled in Vienna, where the doctor has become a *Privatdocent* at the University — his father's Alma Mater. He is, I understand, making quite a name for himself in the field of neurology.

THE END.

In our search for a serial to follow Mr. Van Dine's detective story, we realized that this magazine could not offer an ordinary conventional novel as a successor to "The Greene Murder Case."

With enthusiasm, we present in the May number of SCRIBNER'S MAGAZINE the first instalment of

SEVEN DAYS WHIPPING
BY JOHN BIGGS, JR.

In describing the book, one is at a loss for comparatives. One thinks of James Joyce, of Edgar Allan Poe, even of that fantastic play, "Beggar on Horseback." None of them fits, although all of them suggest something of the truth. "Seven Days Whipping" has certain qualities of Joycean introspection, the fascination of Poe's stories, an atmosphere of fantastic mystery, a revelation of forces hidden deep in the primitive in all of us.

This time the complete story will be presented in three parts, instead of four used in the Van Dine stories. The author is in somewhat the same position with regard to the public as was Mr. Van Dine when we began "The 'Canary' Murder Case" just a year ago. The two detective stories have introduced a new master of the form to thousands of people. "Seven Days Whipping" is as remarkable in an entirely different way, bringing to light a young writer who, we are confident, will be the talk of the next few months.

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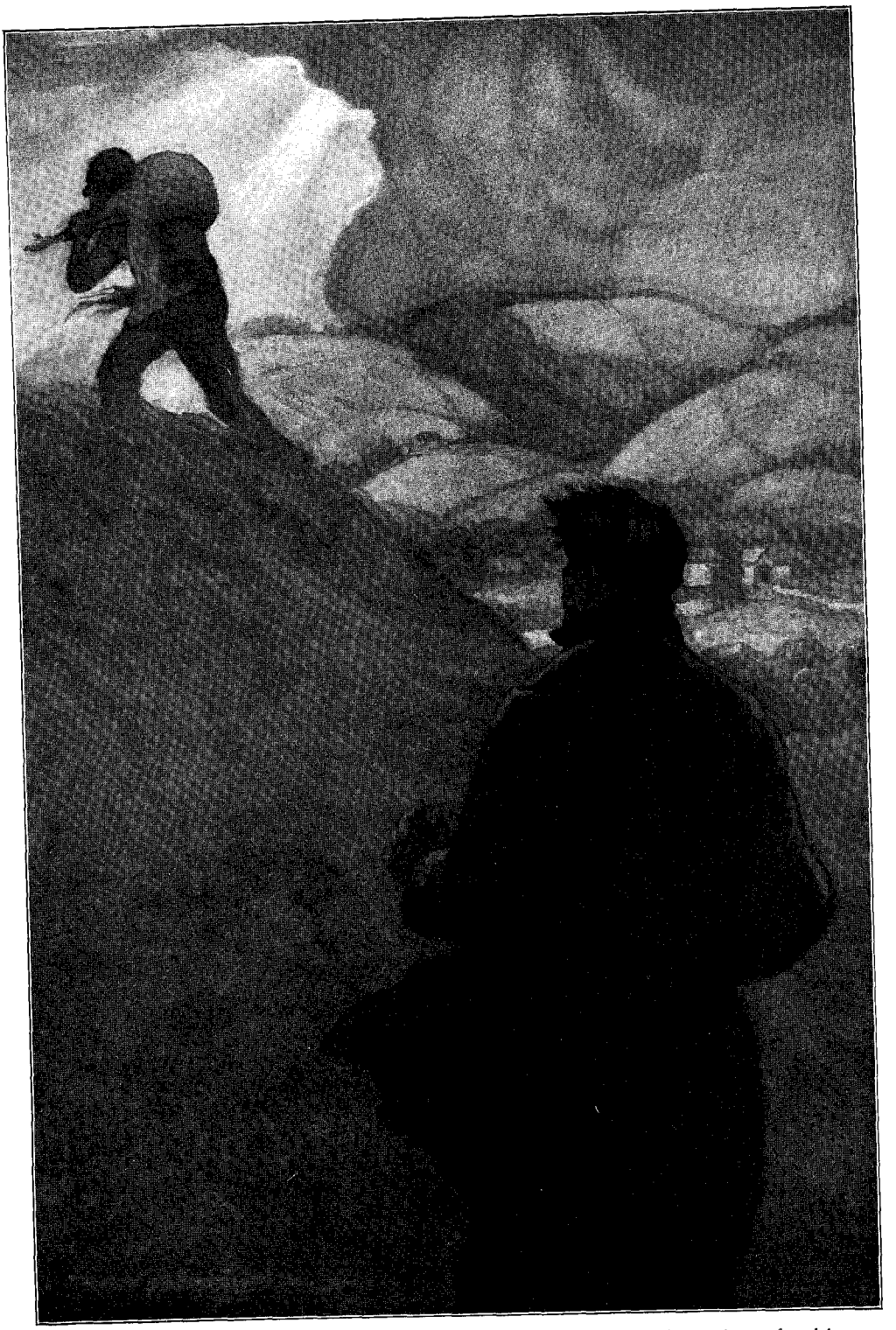

Some irresistible force, bred of his own fear and reluctance, pulled La Place after him.

From a painting by Stafford Good.

—See "Seven Days Whipping," page 551.

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